

HASHAM SHAH
SASSI PUNNUN

RENDERED INTO
ENGLISH VERSE
BY

CHRISTOPHER
SHACKLE

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with an introduction by
ATHAR TAHIR

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TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE

So far as I am aware, the only previous rendering into English of Hasham Shah's *Sassi Punnun* is to be found in the third volume of R.C. Temple's *The Legends of the Punjab* of 1886. Temple's purpose was to show 'a folk-tale, after becoming a literary story, in the process of returning to the people', and he reproduces a terribly short and mangled version of Hasham's poem from the version recited by a bard in District Hoshiarpur.

Temple's version may still be of interest to folklore specialists, but it gives the reader no idea of the literary quality of Hasham's poem, which is rightly regarded as one of the finest of the Punjabi verse romances known as *qissas*. While certainly a most important part of the popular cultural heritage of the Punjab, these *qissas* are not properly to be regarded as works of pure folk-poetry. They were, after all, the creations of individual artists, the best of whom display a rare sophistication and skill in their narrative art, but who are saved from the excessive artificiality that besets so much of the courtly literature of the subcontinent by their closeness to the cultural outlook of their popular audience. As was so often the case in the local literatures of the

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Indus valley, a creative dialogue between educated poet and unlettered audience gave rise to works at once both genuinely popular and genuinely artistic.

The dates most widely accepted for Hasham Shah's life (1753—1823) place him firmly in the classic age of *qissa*-writing, before the far-reaching social and cultural changes introduced into the Punjab by the British conquest of the Sikh kingdom upset the old balance and called new forms of literature into being. Whatever the truth of the popular tradition which connects Hasham directly with the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, it is known that he was a *hakim*, practising the traditional medicine, and a spiritual leader of the Qadiri order, whose tomb lies in the village of Tharpal in District Sialkot.

Like all the great *qissa*-writers, therefore, Hasham Shah was a man of considerable education, and this emerges very clearly from the poetry for which he is remembered. Besides the verse he composed in Persian and in Hindi, his Punjabi poetry includes a very fine set of quatrains in the *dohra* form, besides three complete *qissas*. One of these is on the classical Persian theme of *Shirin Farhad*, which Hasham is said to have been the first to versify in Punjabi. His second *qissa* is on the local Punjabi theme of *Sohni Mahinval*. Although this is a fine poem, similar in feeling to his *Sassi Punnun*, it has been overtaken in popularity by the more ample and elaborately artificial handling of the story later composed by Fazal Shah.

It is, therefore, on his *Sassi Punnun* that Hasham's fame chiefly rests. Undoubtedly his master-work, it must be reckoned among the finest of the Punjabi *qissas*. In it Hasham balances the romantic effects striven after by all the *qissa*-writers with his own distinc-

tively classical sense of economy of form and expression. In this economy Hasham's style is quite different from the exuberant prolixity of Varis Shah, the master of the preceding generation.

Like so many of the *qissas*, *Sassi Punnun* is a tale of tragically thwarted love, in this case between Sassi, daughter of the king of Bhambhore in Sind, who is cast adrift on the river Indus as a baby after it has been foretold that her love would bring disgrace upon her family, and prince Punnun, the son of the ruler of the Hot tribe of Baloch, whose capital is at Kech in the Makran desert. Whatever its origin in place and time, the legend has long been immensely popular in all the lands of the Indus valley. Sassi's sufferings as she wakes to find her Punnun gone, and the torments she endures in the burning wastes of the Maru Thal, as she desperately pursues the tracks of her lover, constitute the high points of the story and have repeatedly received superb literary expression in mystical lyrics, whether in the Sindhi *Risalo* of Shah Abdul Latif Bhittai or in the later *kafian* of Khwaja Ghulam Farid.

Hasham Shah's poem naturally gives great prominence to the sufferings of the unfortunate Sassi, but since it tells the whole story it provides a superb introduction to a legend which has occupied such an important position in the local culture of Pakistan. When, by some happy accident, I first stumbled into the field of Punjabi literature, it seemed to me that the narrative quality of the *qissa* ought to ensure that it would appeal more readily to readers outside this field than other, more lyrical and allusive, genres of Punjabi poetry, if only versions of the best examples could be made available to readers unable to enjoy them in their original language.

IV

The task would be a fairly straightforward one if the *qissas* could be translated into English prose. But this seemingly attractive solution is hardly a realistic one, since so much of the original is lost if its verse form is completely sacrificed. My distant predecessor Usborne showed himself to be an enviably accomplished versifier in his poetic translations of Punjabi folk-poetry. But when he produced his prose version of the greatest of all the *qissas*, Varis Shah's *Hir Ranjha*, he was able to convey to English readers only a bare narrative outline that is almost a caricature of the rich majesty of the original poem. Reluctantly I therefore rejected prose when I embarked some years ago on an English translation of Hasham's *Sassi Punnun*. This first crude attempt was fortunately allowed to gather dust until I felt able to return to the task of revising it completely. It is hoped that the English version now published here will give the reader at least some hint of the beauties of Hasham's poem.

Sassi Punnun has for the translator the great advantage of being one of the shortest and simplest of the classic *qissas*. To this it adds the further advantage of being available in a reliable edition, thanks to the monumental efforts of Professor Harnam Singh Shan in vetting the manuscript evidence and weeding out the corruptions which have gathered round the text of virtually all the *qissas* over time.

In the version printed here, which is based on Professor Shan's edition, the poem consists of 124 stanzas of four lines each, giving a total of 596 lines in all. Each stanza is unified by having the same rhyme running throughout, as *aaaa*, *bbbb*, *cccc*. Like all languages with a full system of grammatical inflections, Punjabi lends itself very readily to the rhymester, and a poet

of Hasham's calibre has no difficulty in finding four good rhymes for each stanza. This is only partly imitated in the translation, where the difficulty of finding sufficient good rhymes in English without seriously distorting the sense has reduced me to a token rhyming of the second and fourth lines of each stanza only.

The other formal features of the original are, however, more closely reproduced in the translation. Punjabi poetry is scanned by syllables, but also has a marked pattern of accentual stresses. Hasham's *Sassi Punnun* is written in the common ballad metre known as *baint khurd* or *davaie*. Each line consists of fourteen long syllables or the equivalent, marked by seven beats. There is a marked break after the eighth long syllable, following the fourth beat. I have sought to retain this rhythmic pattern by using seven-beat lines — in English iambics for the Punjabi trochees — divided after the fourth beat. The half-lines are printed underneath each other as is usual in the lay-out of English verse. Stanza 98 may be quoted in the original and in translation as an example:

nazuk pair gulab sasi de, mehndi nal singare
ashiq vekh bahe ik vari, jiu tinhan par vare
balu ret tape vich thal de, jiu jaun bhunan bhathiare
hasham vekh yaqin sasi da, pher nahin dil hare

*Her delicate and rose-soft feet
made lovelier by henna,
to gain one glimpse of which her lover
would willingly be slain,
were roasted in the desert sand
like barley in the overn.
But, Hasham, gaze on Sassi's faith,*

unturned by toil or strain.

Readers familiar with the traditional versions of the poem may miss the exclusion of the famous third line, rejected on textual grounds by Professor Shan:

suraj bhaj varia vich badlin, darda lishak na mare

*The sun was swallowed by the clouds,
from fear it ceased to shine.*

It will be seen that I have also deliberately followed the convention that the poet's pen-name should occur in the last line of each stanza. In the original, Hasham's pen-name always comes at the beginning of the last line, but I have been freer in my placing. Some may consider the retention of this convention superfluous in English, and the case for dropping it is argued by Taufiq Rafat in the preface to his accomplished translation of *Puran Bhagat* by Hasham's contemporary Qadir Yar. But I felt it important not to lose an important part of the structure of the original, since the pen-name is so often used as a formal device to draw the poet's audience into the action with him, or to denote the expression of his reflections on the actions narrated earlier in the stanza. It has already been suggested that Hasham's *Sassi Punnun* achieves much of its effect by the tight organization of its formal scheme, and it seemed worth attempting to reproduce as many of its features as reasonably possible.

For the convenience of the reader, the main sections of the narrative have been supplied with separate headings in the translation. These are listed together in the table which precedes this introduction. The classic

simplicity of Hasham's style eases the task of both translator and reader by avoiding the copious allusions so favoured by some of the other *qissa*-poets, whether to the details of rural Punjabi life or to the elaborate commonplaces of Persian literary tradition. The poet does, it is true, make repeated references to the story of the Prophet Joseph, comparing the grief of parents to that of Jacob when he lost his beloved son (stanzas 38, 75), referring to Joseph's concealment in the well (26), to the merchants bringing Joseph to Egypt (61, 101), to his being sold into slavery (76), and to the love felt for Joseph by Zulaikha, the Biblical wife of Potiphar (44, 47). But I have taken it that readers would not require pedantic notes to help them appreciate how these repeated references to a well-known story serve further to bind together Hasham's tightly organized narrative by lending a perspective of timelessness to the love of Sassi and Punnun. Footnotes have accordingly been dispensed with, although a glossary of some of the more unusual words employed by the poet has been supplied at the end of the book.

Christopher Shackle
London, October 1983

INTRODUCTION

Of the poetic art and achievement of Hasham Shah Hasham (1752-53 to 1821-1823), in his verse romance *Sayf ul-Maluk*¹ Mian Muhammad Baksh (1830-1904) thus:

Hasham Shah di hashmat barkat gintar wich an avay
 Dur-i yatim jawahir laryan zahir kudh liyavay
 Uh bhi mulk sukhan day andar raja si sarkarda
 Jis qissa di charhay muhimay suyu si sar karda
 Mukhtasar kalam uhnan di dardon bhijji boti
 Dar huya tan sub kuj huya kiya lammi kiya chhoti
 Bayt tarazu tol banayus saray lazat valay
 Kaliyan chun chun haar paruyus, nargis tay gul lalay.

*Hasham Shah's wealth, abundance, is beyond computation.
 Rare pearls, rubies and gems, he strings into composition.
 In the realm of eloquence, a raja of perception,
 The romances campaigned for, he conquered with distinction.
 Brief were his works, but as flesh steeped in suffering,
 For agony, in long tales or short, is everything.*

*Quatrains when weighed in scales were all of such
delight,
Blossoms picked for garlands and many flowers
bright.*

In several editions Hasham's well-known works were, and still are, available. His life was and still is, largely by comparison, little-known. Of this little known, what is available, however, was recorded, as it happened with many other Punjabi Classical poets, mystics and saints, several generations later and predictably suffers from confusion, lacks authenticity — prompted by Confucian veneration. Biography churning into hagiography.

Punjabi poets have, following the universal convention observed by European epic-poets like Dante and Milton, given hints of their life and works, and taken digs at their hard times, in their compositions. Qadir Yar (1802-1892)² a late contemporary of the poet Hasham, among others, followed in that tradition by even dating one of his poems³. Unlike them, Hasham Shah neither mentions his clan affiliations, place of residence, nor offers any clue for biographical inferences. His romance *Sohni Mahinval* offers the solitary reference to his village Jagdeo⁴. Where Hasham does use his own *nom de plume*, as in the last line of each stanza of his romances and *dohras*, it is a matter of arid poetic practice.

Hasham's indifference to his person and the biographical element in his works shows an artistic distancing as well as a certain humility, indicative of his sufi training. Opinions, about his dates of birth and death, thus vary. Some writers have stated that he was born in the revenue circle of Ajnala, Amritsar District, in the village of Jagdeo in 1166 A.H./1752 and died in 1237 A.H./1821⁵. One prefers 1753 and 1823⁶. Others of a more venerative disposition have stated that he was born at Madina in 1148 A.H./1735 died at Jagdeo in 1259 A.H./1843 and was buried in village Thurpal of

Harawal
↑

Slalkot? One critic concurs with these dates on the authority of Sayyid Ghulam Nabi, a descendent of the poet⁸. According to him Hasham was born on 22 Rajab 1148 A.H./27 November 1735 and died on 26 Ramadhan 1259 A.H./21 October, 1843⁹. Such longevity aside, the generally accepted dates are 1753 to 1823 but he may be safely placed between 1752-53 to 1821-23, the decades when the Punjab experienced much disquiet, and suffered much disruption.

The middle of the eighteenth century was a period of discord and dislocation. Power weak at the imperial centre in Delhi, local Governors of the Mughal Empire had taken on a precarious independence. Between 1751 and 1798 Punjab suffered almost fifteen invasions and frequent forays at the hands of the Afghan Ahmad Shah Abdali, the Mughal Government at Delhi, the marauding Sikh misls, the plundering Mahrattas and Taimur Shah son of Ahmad Shah. His successor Shah Zaman finally broke the power of the Bhangi Sikh sardars in 1798¹⁰.

Ranjit Singh a powerful sardar of the Sukarchakia misl was successful in obtaining cession of Lahore from the Afghan sovereign in 1799. At this time large areas of the Punjab were still under the occupation of local Muslim rulers or at the mercy of various Sikh chiefs. In the following decade, while the Napoleonic Wars continued in Europe, Ranjit Singh began to consolidate his power. In 1801 he assumed the title of Maharaja and struck coins in his name¹¹. By the time he died in 1839 he had successfully consolidated his power through a continued process of annexations and expeditions in greater Punjab from the borders of Sindh to beyond Peshawar.

So during the life and times of Hasham Shah, Punjab saw little peace and less prosperity. Ranjit Singh's short interlude provided some relative relief. The repercussions of such turmoil were almost certainly felt by all who resided between the Indus and the Jamna. In Hasham Shah's work one can discern a dual response to the state of affairs. He takes an active role advocating peace and concord in his mystical *dohras*, ←

diorahs. But in his Hindi prose works, he propounds the principles of proper government and the need for harmony. These works provided a clear alternative to the prevailing situation. They preach sanity, sensibility and sensitivity.

Dialectically, he beats a retreat from his cruel contemporary world into the perennial world of romance and tragedy. This response is best manifested in his *Sassi*. Far from the madding crowd of political and social turmoils, he delves in, and dilates on the love and death of two individuals. Theirs is a world providing escape into the timeless while focussing on the fundamental "spirit that impels all living things, all objects and rolls through all things": love. Love central also to the mystical doctrine learnt from his father..

The name and origin of the poet's father too has caused some ambiguity. According to one *tazkirah*/memoirs-writer, the father of the poet was called Haji Muhammad Sharif¹². According to another, Qasim Shah¹³. However, most agree that he was called Haji Muhammad Sharif, a sufi by vocation and carpenter by avocation. He gave spiritual guidance and had a circle of disciples. For a time, it is claimed, he remained at Madinah and performed several pilgrimages to Makkah/*Haj*. Haji Muhammad Sharif was a resident of Madinah, a teacher at the Prophet's Mosque and when Hasham Shah was four years old, the old man, according to another writer, migrated to Jagdeo¹⁴.

This information, neither corroborated by any records nor textual evidence, may have been initiated by adulating followers. That Haji Muhammad Sharif's tomb at Jagdeo was a place of pilgrimage both for Muslims and non-Muslims of South Asia gives further credence to this hypothesis¹⁵. A man of spiritual inclination, he was initiated into the Naushahiyya branch of the Qadiriyya *silsilah*/order¹⁶.

However, almost all *tazkirah*-writers are unanimous in acknowledging that he was a great man of piety, a hakim whose insight and interests went beyond traditional medicinal herbs and potions.

From a religious family, Hasham Shah became well-versed with the religious and literary standard works in Persian and Arabic languages at an early stage. At fourteen or fifteen years of age, after his father's death¹⁷ he continued in his father's role of a spiritual guide and in the profession of carpentry. At his father's hands the son had solemnised the spiritual allegiance/*bai'a*¹⁸. Learned in the art of *ramal*/divination in which he was instructed by Mian Amir-ullah, and an expert in prosody and medicine, he studied Hindi and Sanskrit at Banaras under the guidance of two Hindu scholars¹⁹. The outcome of those studies was his book *Tibb-i Hasham/The Medicine of Hasham* and works such as *Raj Neeti*, *Teeka Panj Granthi*, *Chinta Har*, *Gayan Parkash* and *Gayan Mala*, which were primarily for Hindu and Sikh audience.

The poet is reputed to have married thrice; twice within his own clan the Sayyids. The third time with a Hindu woman, whom, it is said he cured of leprosy²⁰. Another version of this marriage is that Hasham Shah had an Orphic voice and the Hindu woman was enthralled when she heard him recite his verses. She became his third wife²¹.

The question of Hasham Shah's affiliation to the Sikh court has been a matter of considerable controversy. He is reputed to have written an elegy at the death of Maharaja Ranjit Singh's father Mahan Singh (d. 1791)²² and his *Sassi* at the instance of the Sikh Maharaja²³ and recited it at the Hindu festival of Dosahra celebrated by Sikhs with equal zest²⁴. Hotly contested these contentions are. It is popularly believed that pleased by these compositions the Sikh ruler bestowed a *jagir*/an estate on him in Tharpal village²⁵ and another piece of land was gifted to him for extension of mosque and his father's tomb at Jagdeo²⁶.

G.W. Leitner refers to him as a "famous mathematician and Arabic Scholar" who was given a "Jagir near Jagdeo in recognition of his literary eminence"²⁷. In support, two observations have been made. In the record office of Simla, there is a manuscript in Persian

script of Hasham's *Shirin Farhad* (No. 4445/48) which has the royal seal of the Maharaja and is dated 1869 Bikrami/1812 A.D.²⁸. Secondly, Hasham Shah is mentioned in the *Gazetteer of Lahore District 1883-84*²⁹ as being "the court poet of Ranjit Singh" and "much admired for the elegant smoothness of his versification". While the "elegant smoothness of his versification" is apparent from the text of his works, and the popularity testifies to its admiration, Hasham's appointment to the court is not borne out by facts. The district Gazetteer was essentially a handbook embodying an overview of the historical, social, economic, geographic, administrative and developmental issues. Had breadth rather than depth. The compiler of the Gazetteer, almost certainly a Government officer given to broader issues of the District cannot be, nor was, expected to go into nicer details of literary figures and their compositions. Thus there is neither historical nor literary authority for this observation. The statement is based on popular tell-tale information.

Dr. Lajwanti Rama Krishna argues that Ranjit Singh who assumed the title of Maharaja in 1801, some time after he had occupied Lahore, spent the following decade in consolidating his power and had little time for poets and poetry. Only after 1810 did he begin to evince an interest in the arts. If Hasham was elevated to the court it could have been only after 1810 when the poet was fairly advanced in years. "But no history of the Maharaja written before or after 1810 speaks of the poet"³⁰.

Dr. Harnam Singh Shan after a lengthy discussion in which he examines revenue records and information received from the poet's descendents comes to a similar conclusion: Hasham was neither a *raj-kavi*/court poet³¹ nor the author of any elegy³².

Well known as a poet, he was not accorded scholarly attention by his contemporaries or scholars who came several decades after him. For this, several reasons. But the foremost almost certainly was that his works were mostly in Punjabi. A language of the masses, it did not enjoy the prestige of Persian even under the Sikhs

nor that of Urdu under the British raj. Urdu under the British "became synonymous with education"³³ Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit began to lose ground. The sacred and classical languages "became more and more restricted to the practising priestly classes"³⁴. Arabic and Persian continued in mosque-schools and religious academies. The Quran, the *Ahadith*/ Traditions and problems of *Fiqh*/Jurisprudence were taught in Arabic alongwith Persian classics³⁵. In temple-schools Sanskrit learning continued³⁶. Persian the *lingua franca* and the language of gentlemen, was gradually being replaced by Urdu. Like English later, Urdu was "welcomed as an avenue and claim to employment under Government by the more needy in the community and those who wished to ingratiate themselves with the authorities"³⁷. As early as 1872 some prophesied the take-over of Punjabi by Urdu³⁸.

Despite these vital changes on socio-political scene of the Punjab, Punjabi remained widely spoken but largely neglected and "sneered at as a patois"³⁹. Thus it becomes increasingly difficult to accept the statements in the *Gazetteer*, incorporated uncritically by Maula Baksh Kushta, as based on facts. Besides there is a general tendency to bolster the reputation of an individual by associating him with well-known persons or attributing the marvellous or the heroic to him.

In order to accord the sufi-poet a more dynamic role in the affairs of men — perhaps in an attempt to stand him along other Qadiri saints of a more practical bent — he is reputed to have once participated in an uprising against the Sikh *Sarkar*, Ranjit Singh. Ultimately he was pardoned⁴⁰. This too is not supported by any historical evidence. The fundamental problem with most Punjabi poets continues to be that facts are so encrusted with fiction that the ultimate image remains inaccurate, misleading and at best, blurred. Since their works became the property of the common man and were communicated by word of mouth, reverence played a large role in either elevating them beyond their humble clans, or transforming them into

saints or near-saints. Religiously impressive titles and affiliations were added and family antecedents manipulated to suit that position they wished to accord these gifted individuals. This sensibility, fairly ancient, is indicative of the numinous awe poetry inspires in the vulgar minds. In the case of Hasham Shah he has been called a Qurayshi, of the tribe of Quraysh, a Siddiqi of the lineage of Abu Bakar, the first caliph^{4 1} and a Sayyid, Prophet's descendent. Veneration's various ways. And by-ways. Since he was also a sufi, attribution of the miraculous and the supernatural became easier and led to the village being known as Jagdeo Hasham Shah^{4 2}. This tendency is perhaps best testified by the biographies in Urdu, Punjabi and other regional languages. Minor saints acquire reputations comparable to the most competent on the Path. Largely prompted by a traditional tendency to elevate one's teacher it is also a gesture of profound respect and honour. The simple to the complex.

That he was of Sayyid lineage gives this contention further substance. Sayyids in rural and urban areas have been traditionally accorded a respect and reverence in deference to the Prophet (peace be upon him). Even in areas as remote as Baluchistan they are regarded as "persons of sanctity, the terms Pir Sahib, Shah Sahib, or Mulla Sahib are used, and their hands are kissed and people rise when they enter an assembly"^{4 3}. This social veneration often results in open exploitation. A similar impulse seems to be at work in the case of Hasham Shah.

It is known that he was a sufi of the Qadiriyya *silsilah* and a thirteenth generation descendent of the great Baghdad shaykh, Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani. Unlike the Suhrawardiyya in the Sultanate of Dehli in the thirteenth century and the Mawlawiyya in their relations with the authorities of the Saljuq and Ottoman states where both were favoured by the court^{4 4}, the Qadiriyya has been a *silsilah* not given to collaboration or affiliation with those in political power. The life and work of Sayyid Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani, and his indifference to the caliph of Baghdad and all trappings of political and

military power is a standard for followers of his *silsilah*. The disdain in which Miyan Mir Lahori held the emperors of Mughal India and the indifference of Sultan Bahu to worldly power are in accordance with that tradition. Both of the Qadiriyya. Both Masters. Both above, if not beyond, the mundane. To expect then that Hasham Shah, not only a Sayyid but also a follower of the Qadiriyya, would accept the position of a court poet and sing of the generosity and charity of a worldly ruler is to overlook the entire tradition of the Qadiriyya and the social position of the Sayyids. Poetry which is sycophantic and eulogizes worldly gifts cannot be happily attributed to Hasham Shah. In deed in his *dohras* and *diorahs* there is a repeated dismissal of the mundane and the temporal.

Dr. Shan's research has shown that according to the descendents, the family was given several wells and attached lands. He lists Takkia Hasham Shah, Faqiran-Wali Khui, Attari Baba Hasham Shah, Bajian-Wala Khuh, Zamin Wan⁴⁵. This information was collected as late as 1955. But even after extensive sifting of revenue and legal records be concluded that these estates were not granted to Hasham Shah by Ranjit Singh for his services at court⁴⁶. And if Hasham was accorded patronage by Ranjit Singh it may have been when he was a territorial chief. This patronage could have continued unofficially in the shape of small gifts of little importance even after the latter had become Maharaja of the Punjab⁴⁷. However one may safely conclude that the land and wells that came to the family were given probably by wealthy devotees or local sardars for his reputation as a *pir* or saint and *hakim*/physician rather than as a poet.

WORKS

Apart from the romances, *Sassi Punnun*, *Sohni Mahinval*, *Shirin Farhad*⁴⁸, *Hir Ranjha*, *Layla Majnun*, the poet is also stated to have written the following works, *Dohray Hasham* or *Darya-i Haqiqat*, *Divan*

*Hasham, Mathnavi Hasham, Tibb Hasham, Biyaz-i Hasham, Shalok Hasham, Zubdat al-Rammal, Chahar Bahar Hasham, Raj Neeti, Teeka Panj Granthi, Kafian Hasham, Chintahar, Gayan Parkash and Gayan Mala*⁴⁹. In addition the romance *Mahmud Shah Ghaznavi, Ganj Israr* (three *si harfis* and *ghazals*), *Ma'dan Faiz* and a *si harfi* about Abd al-Qadir al-Jilani in Punjabi, *Ganj Ma'ni* in Persian and *Pothi Hikmat* in Hindi have been mentioned⁵⁰. Dr. Shan adds that three *Munajat, Bara Mah* and another *si harfi* on Sassi are extant in manuscript form in Punjabi. Similarly *Aath Madahyat* in Urdu and *Faqar Namah* a commentary on the *hadith*/Tradition of the Prophet, "Al-faqr al-fakhri"/"voluntary poverty is my pride" in Persian and Arabic and *Majmua' Madahyat wa Munajat* in Persian remain even today unpublished⁵¹.

→ These works vouch for Hasham Shah's versatility. Of language and subject. To deduce from a linguistic examination of Hashim Shah's *Sassi* that he preferred one dialect of Punjabi over another is perhaps to limit his repertoire. As observed by Mohan Singh "there is hardly a writer any where from Rawalpindi to Patiala, from Jammu to Montgomery, who does not mix in his work syntactical and verbal element from both Lahndi and Hindwi"⁵². This observation points to the fundamental facility of the Punjabi language. It borrows from other languages and makes its own all that suits it. Similarly the dialects within Punjabi. Poets tend to borrow extensively from other dialects without inhibition⁵³. This may well be prompted by an urge to give their compositions a wider geographical range or to display their learning and experience. Often a conscious effort is made to use dialectal variants to increase the store of vocabulary and widen the application of the language. However, the element of sheer convenience too cannot be ruled out. So that word forms peculiar to other dialects, specially in the matter of end-rhymes, are employed for the music of their compositions. Such poetic licence permits the poets to juggle literary, dialectal or slang forms. Punjabi therefore, externally in contact with other languages and internally, in its various

dialects, tends to be eclectic and more widely understood than other languages of the Indus Valley region.

Subjects: /from medicine to romances, from divination and the occult (*Zabdat al-Rammal*) to biography, from poetry to politics (*Raj Neeti*). But amongst his best known works one may list his *Bara Mah*, *Diorahs*, *Dohras* and the romances. The *Bara Mah* of Hasham is considered "the best Punjabi imitation" of the Persian genre⁵⁴, without having any thing to do with the European pastorals such as Spenser's *Shepherd's Calendar* (1579). This form of songs composed on the twelve months, made popular by Jawan a well known Urdu poet, can be found in almost every dialect of North West India⁵⁵.

Seen in the context of Hasham's background, this versatility is not surprising. The best local poets of the seventeenth and eighteenth century Punjab came from pir families. They enjoyed a privileged social position and status, superior education and culture. Nature and nurture⁵⁶.

THE LEGEND

Sassi is born to an eminent person of Bhambhore after a long wait and many acts of charity. Soothsayers and pundits prophesy that she would shame the house. So she is cast to the river in a wooden box. A washerman finds her and, childless, brings her up as his own daughter. Grown to womanhood her reputation as a beauty grows. She hears of Punnun's good looks and falls in love with him, without even having met him. While Punnun, son of the ruler of Kech, hearing of her, falls in love too. He travels. Meets her. He is induced or drugged away. Sassi searching for him perishes in the Thal desert. Punnun's search after his recovery leads him to the spot and he too dies.

These essentials of the tale appear to be the same in all versions. Elaborations and changes have occurred and predictably names of the characters and the locales have

been variously recorded.

Variations on Sassi — Saswi, Saswee⁵⁷ and Sasni⁵⁸ meaning the moon in Sanskrit⁵⁹; Punnun as Punnun and Punhu⁶⁰. Adam the Jam has also been called Naoon the Brahmin⁶¹. Bhambhore⁶² or rather Banbhore is Bhambarawa, the old Greek Barbarike⁶³, whose ruins are located on the northern branch of the Gharo Creek, about forty miles east of Karachi on the highway to Hyderabad⁶⁴. The washerman has been called Atta, Muhammad⁶⁵, Mahmud⁶⁶, Punnun's father Ali and Ari⁶⁷, while Kutch, Kech, Kecham has been variously identified as Kiraj, Kich and Kej⁶⁸.

Burton places the romance in the days when Islam was partially spread over Sindh⁶⁹, probably because of the anti-Muslim attitude of Sassi's real father. But the possibility that this was a latter interpolation cannot be ruled out. Initially, the issue of the castes, Sassi being a Brahmin and Punnun of the Kashtirya traders, could have caused her father to condemn her to the river. With the advent of the Muslims, for greater effect, the Hindu trader may have been transformed into a Muslim.

Recent research has shown that settlements at Bhambhore probably came to an end in the twelfth or thirteenth century partly due to the shifting of the river and partly on account of a violent disturbance which left its mark all over the site⁷⁰. From this one may safely conclude that the lovers' legend goes as far back as the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, if not beyond.

The legend's popularity is evidenced by the fact that it is known even beyond the country through which the Indus flows. It has found expression in folksongs, popular ballads, romances and mystical verse of several languages. The oldest romance available in Punjabi is that by Hafiz Barkhurdar a seventeenth century poet⁷¹. At about the same time the legend was finding expression in Persian. Wladimir Ivanow mentions *Zeba wa Nigar* composed by Mohammad Ridai who completed it in 1053 A.H./1643 in the *mathnavi* form⁷². Sassi has been called Zeba, Punnun Nigar, the town of

Bhambhore, Hassanabad⁷³ while Kech remains the same⁷⁴. In Persian prose, the romance was written even earlier by Sayyid Ali⁷⁵. In the eighteen century as far east as Lucknow, the tale found expression at the hands of Nawab Muhabbat Khan Muhabbat (1750-1808). His romance *Asrar-i Muhabbat* was composed in 1783 in Urdu⁷⁶.

In the Nineteenth century the tale was translated into English verse as 'Suswee and Punhoo' by Sir F. Goldsmid from the Sindhi version⁷⁷.

THE LEGEND IN KUTCH

The story may originally have come from Kutch⁷⁸ but the presence of Kech in Baluchistan rules out this suggestion. However, Mrs. Postans' observations provide every indication that it was current in the local dialect as far away as Kutch of Gujrat-Kathiawar to the south-east of Sindh. It had been scribed by means of Gujrati characters⁷⁹. According to the Kutch version⁸⁰ the story is located in Burhamanabad. Here resides a rich man, rather than the King, who is Sassi's father. The father parts with his daughter because she, it is predicted, would marry a Muslim. Infant Sassi is found by a dhobi at Burumpore. Punnun, son of the Governor of Kutch, enters into the service of the dhobi on hearing of her beauty. It due course of time they are married. Brothers of Punnun size and take him home. They do not intoxicate him with wine as in Hasham Shah's version. The grieved Sassi travels forty *kos* or about fifty miles in search of her busband. Exhausted by thirst and fatigue, she falls to the gound but is refreshed by a stream of limpid water which gushes forth as her foot strikes a stone. As she wanders further, a shepherd approaches her with dubious intentions but Sassi pleads with him. He is dissuaded from his wicked designs. Unhappy Sassi prays for her end whereupon the hill she stands on, opens and she is interred. Meanwhile Punnun reaches the place and prays for meeting his beloved wife. The hill once again parts and the two lovers are joined underground⁸¹.

Mrs. Postans differentiates between the Bhats and Dhadis the agents of the tale's oral transmission. "A Bhat signifies a relater of songs and stories, and a chaunter of local odes in praise of Jarrejah chiefs, and Rajpoot princes of Cutch"⁸² who both sings and recites without accompaniment. Many of these Bhats were Brahmins. The Dadhis, of a lower caste, were vocalists and story tellers who were accompanied by a small instrumental band⁸³. Since the latter were travelling performers, they probably had a greater role than the Brahmin Bhats in disseminating the tale.

THE LEGEND IN SINDH

→ Richard F. Burton who recorded a Sindhi version⁸⁴ stated that the story was known in the country lying between Makran and Afghanistan, Jaselmir and Eastern Persia in Persian, Jataki and Baluchi languages⁸⁵ and very few of the "wild tribes" of Sindh and Baluchistan were ignorant of it⁸⁶. The popularity of this romance was widespread, for even as far north as the Attock district, about three miles south of the village of Shah Muhammad Wali, a temple was long known as *Sassi da Kallara*⁸⁷ or *Sassi di Dhaular*.⁸⁸

In the Sindhi version Sassi's father is a Brahmin of Bambhuna rather than the Raja of Bhambhore and she is predicted to become a Muslim and disgrace her family. Cast in the Indus she is found by Mahmud a washerman at Bambhora. Punnun or Punhal Khan⁸⁹ is introduced by reputation to Sassi by Babiho a Hindu trader in the employ of Punnun's father, Ari, not Ali, the Jam or prince of Kech. On his return he tells Punnun of Sassi's love. Already married twice, despite the pleadings of his wives he leaves for Bhambhore. Punnun reaches his destination, after some delay at the hands of another lady called Sehjan who had fallen in love with him. The camp is pitched in Sassi's garden, but the lady's modesty prevents her from visiting him. When they do meet, he is told that he must become a washerman to marry

her. But their conjugal happiness is short-lived. Bhagula the wife of a goldsmith, falls in love with him and tries to seduce him and persuades him that Sassi is unfaithful. Sassi proves her innocence by the trial of fire. The story ends when Punnun, intoxicated by his brothers is carried back home. Sassi's end is similar to that in the Kutch version except that the goatherd does not turn hermit as the shepherd⁹⁰.

THE LEGEND IN PUNJAB

A good knowledge of Sindhi introduces one to "a variety of cognate languages as the Punjabi, Jataki, Pushto, Belochi, Brahui and others spoken in the countries west of Indus"⁹¹.

Punjabi has been divided into four distinct yet overlapping strands. Sahaskriti or old Hindwi, Hindwi or Hindi or Bakha, a language common to the whole of North India during the seventh or eighth centuries of post-Gupta Bhagti revival⁹². Lahndi, a language of West Punjab which with Hindwi shares much with Kashmiri, Sindhi, Gujrati, Marathi, Dakhni⁹³ and Lahori or Majhi of central Punjab⁹⁴. Lahndi or Jataki includes Pothohari, Dhanayi, Multani, Derajati, Bahawalpuri Puchhi and Shahpuri dialects⁹⁵. Lahndi however, dominated from the eleventh to fifteenth century as is apparent from the writings of Baba Farid Ganj-i Shakar, Ibrahim, Kabir, Kamal, Gorakh Nath, Charpat, Chand, Hamir and Khusro. In this phase, Arabic, Turkish and Persian languages blend with Punjabi phonetics and words and Hindwi verbal forms⁹⁶. From this it can be inferred that the overlapping of Lahndi or Jataki and Sindhi in the lower regions of the Punjab and that of Lahndi and Lahori in the central, facilitated the dissemination of the legend. Though originating in Baluchistan-Sindh, the legend found its way through the medium of Sindhi into Lahndi and from the Lahndi into the Lahori of central Punjab during the eleventh and fifteenth centuries, until finally it took root and came

into its own in the work of Hasham Shah.

The introduction in all probability was initiated by wandering Langhas and *Mirasis* who performed at seasonal fairs and at shrines of saints, by caravans of traders and by travellers using the land and river routes. Of the several categories of Punjab bards, the professional ballad singers or *Mirasi*, a performer at the festivals and the rough villagers, "with a turn for poetry and recitation", seem to have been the active carriers of this tradition⁹⁷. These traditors, almost certainly were assisted by the sufis since in the Sindhi Punnun had become a symbol, an "immortal spark", "a kind of pilgrim who in his progress towards eternity leaves behind him the world and its connections, its pleasures and its pains"⁹⁸. In the *Risalo* of the great Sindhi poet Shah Abd al-Latif Bhitai (1689-1752) the sufi interpretation of the Baluch and his beloved found its richest and most influential expression. The lovers, transformed, came to be "considered as saints or holy characters" and their tombs, places of pilgrimage⁹⁹. This is not surprising since "saints scarcely differ from folktale heroes of the conventional sort"¹⁰⁰. In the Punjabi too, the spiritual aspect was emphasized by certain poets. The famous pairs, Layla and Majnun, Yousaf and Zulaikha, Shirin and Farhad, Hir and Ranjha, Sohni and Mahinval, Mirza and Sahiban, Sassi and Punnun all have been transformed, by many a pen into mystical principles and principals. Not only have full romances been composed on them but they have been used as symbols in shorter poems/*kafis* and *ghazals*. The symbolic emphasis may have varied from area to area, from poet to poet but these victims of love have always exercised a potent influence on the minds of the common and the gifted.

HASHAM SHAH'S VERSION.

With Hasham Shah the matter becomes complicated. His heritage and his profoundly moving *diohras* and

dohras confirm his spiritual inclinations. This has led many a critic to see his Sassi through different perspectives. One may question if a work of art can be studied divorced from the totality of the artist's experience. But at the same time a work of art must have certain elements withing it to prompt a particular interpretation rather than another. Even when several levels of meanings are implied — as indeed one finds not infrequently in the court-poetry of the great Urdu Masters — one level must emerge as the most significant. Even when the levels of meaning are deliberately involved, the character as a symbol must be unambiguous enough to communicate its emphasis readily to the reader/listener. Confusion in the reader/ listener's mind can take away from the immediacy and impact of the work.

Here there are no intrinsic hints in the text, nor can the lovers be seen as unambiguous principles of the mystical. Shorn of all symbolism, they are seen as flesh and blood, suffering longing and waiting, anxiety and love, suffering distress and death. Humans caught in the whirl of the world.

Many have written about the fate of Sassi and her lover before and after Hasham Shah¹⁰¹ but it was for his *Sassi* that the common man's enthusiasm, critics acclaim, bards' voices and the poets' praise were reserved. A contemporary Ahmad Yar (1768-1848) thus:

Hasham Sassi sohni jori, sad rahmat ustadun.

*Hasham composed excellent Sassi, hundred blessings on the master*¹⁰²

Of Hasham's *Shirin Farhad*, Mian Muhammad Baksh has certain reservations to the extent that he suggests that it could be the work of another poet of the same name¹⁰³. However, in the case of Sassi, Hasham follows the folktale faithfully.

The rendering recorded by R.C. Temple is, as he

admits, "in a terribly curtailed, confused and mangled shape"¹⁰⁴. Since this was collected from a bard, the singer of Hushiarpur District has shown an indifference to the original verse order. The original of 124 stanzas is reduced to twenty two. The first thirteen stanzas bring the tale upto the time Sassi is ready to meet Punnun. Stanza 14 is of one line where Sassi leaves for the desert. There is no intervening period in which the lovers long for each other nor is there any indication of Punnun's departure from Kech in search of Sassi. From stanzas 15 to 22 Sassi's state in the desert, and her death is described, with a curtailed version of the end. This rendering though far from the original of Hasham Shah captures some of the high points in the story and demonstrates "a folktale, after becoming a literary story, in the process of returning to the people"¹⁰⁵.

The creative aspect, the imagination of the poet must be seen in relation to the dense background of inherited tradition. The tale had a fluid existence. Long taken root in the bazars of towns, the market fairs of villages and psyche of the common man, the tale existed independent of the renderings by Hasham Shah and those before and after him. Though the poet's compositions were widely sung and recited often to the accompaniment of a stringed instrument and tongs, they were neither faithfully adhered to nor held sacrosanct. Each bard or minstrel gave his own peculiar stamp to the tale. Sometimes practising a "limited", at others a "free" or "radical" improvisation¹⁰⁶. He borrowed from one poet, mixed and mingled it with portions from another. Sometimes singing the tale or interspersing it with spoken connecting passages of his own, or intoning or chanting it or employing the recitative types of delivery or a combination of all these. Such a process resulted in the version recorded by Temple. The tale thus enjoyed a parallel existence. Always with the people, it retained its folk elements even when poets tried to accord it literary dimensions.

Hasham Shah's *Sassi* may be divided into five distinct sections. Section-I, with a short prologue (ss. 1-3) ends

with stanza 19 when Sassi is cast to the river. Her voyage marks the beginning of Section II and ends with stanza 39 when her identity is revealed. These two sections correspond to Aristotle's 'Beginning' or the 'Exposition' of the neo-Classicals.

Section III commences with Sassi's beholding Pun-nun's picture in the garden (s. 40) and ends with the abduction of Punnun (s. 94). Section IV describes Sassi's desperation and her argument with her foster-mother. These sections comprise the Aristotelian 'Middle', wherein the development of the action takes place.

Section V, Aristotle's 'End' is the grand finale. The most powerful part of the poem it starts at a high note with stanza 95 and reaches its crescendo in stanzas 111 to 114 followed by an echo, vibrant but muted, of the death motif in Punnun's action in the last ten stanzas.

This tri-partite division was derived from creative works rather than the other way round. So the pedantic laws postulated by the Axel Olrik for the folk epic. Creative genius, a universal phenomenon, finds expression in ways which are often similar and precedes academic stratification. Creators before critics. Language before Grammar. It is not surprising, when the process is reversed to find in Hasham's *Sassi* how closely the epic laws have manifested themselves. His version shows that in essence his *Sagenwelt* or world of *Sage*¹⁰⁷ is very similar to that of the original legend¹⁰⁸.

Returning to the Aristotelian divisions each progressing section is full of an internal dynamic which is illustrated by the shifts in scenes and interaction of characters. From the relatively calm Section I and II where the action is *linear* and the only major shift is that from the washermen-suitors to the court of Adam Jam, in the central sections, the verve is more obvious and the scene-shift rapid. In Section III, Sassi is with the trader in a Bhambhore garden (ss. 40-45). The capture of the Kech caravan takes place (ss. 46-52). The scene shifts to Kech and help is sought (ss. 53-57). Punnun is persuaded to come to the merchants' rescue (ss. 58-61).

Again the locale is shifted, to Sassi's garden where the lovers meet (ss. 62-72). With yet another shift, as if to tackle the creative problem of simultaneity of action, the grievous plight of Punnun's people is graphically captured. In the next five stanzas (ss. 77-82) the abduction of Punnun is carried out in Bhambhore.

Punnun out of the way, the focus is now on Sassi at home (ss. 83-94), followed by Sassi in the desert (ss. 95-114). With the final shift to Punnun's predicament — again the attempt at capturing two actions at the same point in time — and death, it becomes apparent that the furious activity of the mental landscape reflects in the wasteland between Kech and Bhambhore. This oscillation at one level imparts a view more mimetic of the drama of life than a linear rendering would. At another it duplicates the vibrations of a losing struggle and resultant human tragedy.

SECTION I

In keeping with the convention of Punjabi poets, the poem opens with an euology to God. His unchanging permanence is sung of and the crucial principle of love voiced:

Har arvah aseer ishaq da, qayd jism wich paya
Jo makhlug nah bahar os theen, arz sama wich aya

*who's made each soul love's prisoner,
inside the body chained,
for all that lives lies under love
on earth and in the heavens.*

(s.2)

With simplicity of the spoken idiom reminiscent of a similar statement made by Qadir Yar in his *Miraj Namah*¹⁰⁹, the poet states:

Husn kalam jo shair karday, sukhan nah satheen aya

Jiha ku aql shaur asada, asan bhi akh sunaya

*The noble language poets use
I find to be beyond me,
but with that talents I possess
this story have I told.*

(s.3)

His artistic modesty like Qadir Yar's is a poet's pose. Both, despite such humble professing or protestations were learned in more disciplines than one.

Following the prologue the poem telescopes to Bhambhore. Adam the Jam is a Solomon-like figure to whom, "all birds and beasts, all jinn and men/bowed" (s.4). Despite his authority on all that crawl on the surface of the earth he is helpless. Bhambhore is comparable to Paradise but for the serpent of discontent. Childless is he. Possess nothing though he has everything. A condition balanced with great skill towards the end of the poem when the lovers die in the desert, having nothing. Yet come together in death and possess everything. In the beginning is the end.

The practice of going to saints' and martyrs' tombs to request fulfillment of wishes — a popular folk motif — results in the birth of Sassi. Adam's crisis and the subsequent crystallisation of fulfillment is interlaced with a subtle evocation of the physical process of conception:

Dur-i yatim sadaf wich aya, suni pukar dilan di

*At last these heartfelt cries were heard
a pearl formed in the shell.*

(s.8)

Full festivity follows. But is short-lived. The astrologers, not mere diviners, are wise men and ancient, learned in the Torah. Introduction of the Old Testament like the frequent references to Biblical-Quranic personages, Joseph (ss. 26, 47, 76, 101), Jacob (ss. 38, 74), Potiphar's wife, Zulaikha (ss. 44, 47), Noah

(s.23), Jesus (s.49) and to Aristotle (s.20), Plato (s.20), Alexander (s.4) and the ageless Khizr (s.103) reinforces the feeling of antiquity and timelessness. The motif of consulting wisemen is common in Punjab folklore and has been similarly employed in the case of Puran Bhagat. The response of the astrologers is human. They hesitate for fear of royal wrath. But truth must out:

Ashiq hog kamal Sassi, jad hog javan siyani
Must bihosh Thalan wich marsi, dard firaq ranjani.

*A faultless lover will she be
When she's a maiden young.
Then in the desert will she die
by partings' sorrow slain'.*

(s.14)

The folk-motif of prophecy of general misfortune to a newborn child is also a popular one and present in several cultures¹¹⁰. Throughout Indian folklore and legends, fortune-telling, prophecy, soothsaying, oracle making, built up by the various kind of Indian priesthood, is seen to clearly rest on the universal and eradicable belief in fate¹¹¹. Fate which from the very outset controls the parameters of human action. As far as the poem is concerned stating the end at the beginning necessitates greater attention to the progress of the romance. The mental states of the characters, the play of various forces, the role of fate, and the progress of the characters towards their destiny become of fundamental importance. Instead of the story-line being important, a familiar plot obliges greater attention to the nicety and subtlety of handling and of its working out.

The Jam reacts in a manner as ancient as the Greek gods and the age of the Pharoos. As Perseus was cast to the sea and Moses to the river, so Sassi to the waters. The river-borne foundling is a favourite variety in the Punjab¹¹². In folklores ranging from the Eskimo and the European to Egyptian and the Chinese, one finds

this popular motif¹¹³. Adam Jam, like Puran's father, Sahlivan, is concerned more about his personal pride and propriety than the fate of his flesh and blood¹¹⁴.

The decision difficult for the father, but social norms must be preserved. Sassi's projected behaviour already brands her as an unclean child because of her potential to challenge the accepted. The quandary of the king's mind is highlighted when the vizier, Sassi's advocate, questions the wisdom of killing her and points to the fundamental question of predestination and choice:

..... kih dosh Sassi nu, likhya lakhari.

..... 'Why blame Sassi?
The Writer wrote her fate.

(s.17)

This question, of *qadar*/free will and *jabr*/pre-destination of considerable theological and religious debate in Muslim circles goes unanswered. But it provides a new dimension to human affairs. For what is Sassi but a puppet in the hands of *kismet*? And is she to be blamed for what has been ordained? The vizier's advocacy is instrumental in mitigating the seriousness of the proposed action. Instead, placed in a chest, fixed with chains, she is floated in the river. For Hasham the chain is cruelty itself and presages a far more torturous treatment at the hands of the world. A Christ-like figure, suffering. Unlike Christ not for the original sin but for the final, for what fate has in store for her.

SECTION II

Sassi's chest is compared to Noah's ark. The description here of the beasts and demons that infest the water is a stock image and also seen in Qadir Yar's *Sohni Mahinval* when Sohni crosses the river. Biblical reference to Noah is significant not only for the timeless

quality imparted to the narrative but also as a device to show that the infant, like Noah, is leaving behind a world and entering into a new one.

Sassi's maturity in the house of Atta, the washerman is swift. Hasham Shah comes to the point within a stanza. This swiftness of narrative is as skilful as the opening stanza of Qadir Yar's *Puran Bhagat*. Grown to maidenhood, washermen are desirous of marrying her. Hasham Shah tellingly captures the social more, for such delicate subjects are broached through subtle reference since the modesty of a female is involved. Despite her long years with the washerman she is aware of her high birth. Atta's clansmen refused, decide to bring the matter to the notice of the Jam suggesting that he marry her. Agents of maliciousness, they are totally in character, being of low birth and therefore mean and manipulative. Theirs is an accepted role and place in the social structure.

Sassi sent for, with characteristic high spirit refuses to see her father. Not even to her real mother's pleadings is she susceptible. While refusing to live with them, she is quite capable of using his offices to control the fords for the detention of the Kech carvans, thus exploiting their position to meet her ends. Admirable if not, totally likeable.

SECTION III

Sassi's encounter with a merchant makes her aware of Punnun's existence. His words "fired her heart/like sparks that fall on straw" (s.43). Falling in love on the mere mention or description and through sight of pictures are motifs found in folklores as diverse as the Icelandic and the Japanese, the Indonesian and Arabian¹¹⁵. Like Zulaikha, the wife of Potiphar, she can neither eat nor sleep but keeps the matter secret. She is in a state:

Dil wich suz firaq Punnun da, roz ulamba balay

Atash ap apay bhatyara, ap jalyan nit jalay
 Phir be dard aram nah daynda, wang chikha nit
 jalay
 Hasham phir kiha sukh sowan, jad peetay praym
 pialay

*Now every day away from Punnun
 makes her love blaze fiercer.
 Herself the fire, herself the stoker.
 her flames she ever fans.
 Allowed no rest by cruel absence
 like a pyre she burns,
 for, Hasham, none who've tasted love
 can sleep on soft divans.*

(s.45)

A period of twelve months passes before the merchants from Kech arrive. The number twelve has a folk significance because it recurs in many folktales as a period of waiting, longing or exile. In Punjabi it has crystallised in the poetic form of *Bara Mah*. In the case of Qadir Yar's *Puran*, he suffers two periods of twelve years. Sassi's gloom and grief give way to hope:

Sassi sakht ghami wich ahi, dard firaq ranjani
 Na kujh surt awaz badan wich, na kujh hosh tikani
 Ruh ruhan wich phiray Sassi da, Malik ul-Maut
 nishani
 Hasham misal Baluch Maseeha, phayr diti zindgani

*In deepest grief has Sassi sunk,
 tormented by his absence.
 Her voice and body ceased their function
 and senseless was her brain.
 Her soul had mingled with those souls
 against whom Death takes aim.
 The tribesmen, Hasham, now like Jesus
 give her life again.*

(s.49)

The traders are treated with characteristic eastern hospitality. On learning their relation to Punnun she decides, with no qualms of conscience, to imprison them until he comes to their rescue. The news is carried to the Hot, Ali, Punnun's father, the Baluch chief¹¹⁶ and his mother. Refused by them, the merchants plead with Punnun, describing Sassi's loveliness. Punnun's reaction is exactly like Sassi's. Hearing is enough: "Already in Bhambhore at heart/he thought no more of Kech" (s.59).

So Punnun to Bhambhore. He camps in Sassi's garden, destroys the paradisaean order by letting his camel loose in it. Just as Sassi has destroyed the larger established order by challenging its traditional norms, love comes with a force upsetting and disrupting the tranquility of the established structure. With the news of the caravan's arrival, an insight into Sassi's mind is provided:

"Sun faryad Sassi wich dil day, aql khayal vacharay
Kaun kaminay ayd dalayri, karan Baluch nikaray
Shaid Hot Punnun wich hosi, tahin karan pasaray
Hasham karan ayd fuzuli, kaun gharib bicharay"

*On hearing their complaints did Sassi
ponder in her heart,
'Would any lowly tribesmen dare
to be so uncontrolled?
Perhaps my prince may be among them
to make them act so free,
else, Hasham, to commit such folly
would poor folk thus make bold?'*

(s.67)

The lovers meet. In one garden, of the merchant, she saw his likeness in another she encounters him. They are spell-bound into silence:

Dithyan bajh nah rajan mulay, nain udas ayanay
Sikdiyan yar milay jis dil nun, qimat qadar pachha-

nay

*their sad and simple eyes found comfort
in this sight alone.
None but two lovers realize
such moments preciousness.*

(s.72)

The scene shifts once again. The Baluch free, request their prince to leave for Kech. But Punnun refuses. News of Punnun's behaviour is taken by the folk of Kech with the extreme emotion typical of folk stories:

*Put put wal sutan wich gallian, mahlin shor zananay
While in the streets men tore their hair
indoors the women wailed.*

(s.76)

At one level this is indicative of the people's love for Punnun, at another such hysterical expression stresses the disturbing depths of human psyche. On Sassi's discovery at dawn of Punnun's departure, her reaction finds expression in a manner which is typical of the Indus Valley culture: she breaks her bangles and throws dust upon her head indicating her extreme grief at the loss of her love. In the Sindhi version the lovers marry but in Hasham Shah there is no indication that they have been betrothed. Even when she has lain in bed with him, Punnun is found to be too drunk (s.81).

Frequent references to Jacob and Joseph prompt one to see the abduction by Punnun's brothers as similar in spirit to that by Joseph's brothers. Both cause separation. One between the son and the loving father, the other between a lover and his beloved.

SECTION IV

The penultimate section provides an acute picture of

Sassi's desperation. Punnun's departure ushers in the period of ultimate tragedy for her:

Dozakh ik pal mul nah hosi, tatta tis din jiya

*Not even hell will ever be
so scorching as that day.*

(s.85)

The earlier occasional references to heat, burning and the sun are now more frequent and acquire a terrifying aspect as the heroine wanders out. She roams the streets like one mad. Her extreme condition is graphically captured, like the reaction of the Kech population: "Out from the house in disarray/she rushed with streaming hair". (s.86)

The washerwoman reprimands her foster-daughter and reasons with her. Stanzas 87 to 94 are perhaps the most skilful in the entire poem. The mother's pleadings, Sassi's reaction, her reassurance, Sassi's grave fears, her mother's response and Sassi's deepest anxiety lest Punnun not return, her mother's attempt at dissuasion and finally Sassi's resolution to search for her prince in the Thal desert, are rendered in dialogue swift, unadorned, effective. The dramatic tension, so well rendered here, is also encountered earlier when Adam Jam questions the astrologers (ss. 13-14), when the vizier pleads for Sassi (s.17), her parents consult her regarding marriage (ss. 73-74), she meets the merchant (ss. 42-43) and people at Kech are informed of Punnun's refusal to return (ss. 74-76). These encourage the impression that romances in the Punjabi were a substitute for the *Ram Lilas*, stage plays based on the epic *Ramayana* so popular amongst the Hindus and at the same time a complement to the *Ras Lilas*, plays on makeshift stage occasionally performed in the rural areas by travelling companies¹¹⁷.

It is at such moments that the performance aspect of the tale becomes most pronounced. It remains integral to the identity of the legend or poem. Punjabi

poets from Farid Ganj-i Shakar onwards were alive to the fact that their poems would be carried by word of mouth. Like the work of medieval Chinese ballad-writers, the poets of classical Greece and the Middle Ages of Europe, the Punjabi poem was intended for oral delivery and composed in a form suitable for performance¹¹⁸. Therefore, "differently performed, or performed at a different time or to a different audience or by a different singer," it became a different poem¹¹⁹.

Sassi takes the last desperate step in a moment of high emotion:

Tursan mul nah mursan rahun, jan tali par dharsan
lab lag sas niras nah hovan, marnon mol nah darsan
Jay raṁ kuk Sassi di sunsi, ja milan pug pharsan
Hasham nahin shaheed ho vaysan, Thai Maru wich
marsan.

*I'll go I'll never turn aside!
I'll risk my very life!
While still I breathe I'll not despair!
I'll never fear to die!
If Sassi's prayer is answered then
I'll go and kiss his feet!
Else, Hasham, in the Maru Thal
martyred will I lie!*

(s.94)

SECTION V

The final, most emotionally charged, section shows the slow but sure progress of Sassi's mental state towards the acceptance of the inevitable: death. Her decision is not simply self-fulfilment. It is self renunciation of all possibilities. She attempts to counter the tragic element in human existence by choice and decision and ironically, follows the route fate has already charted for her. After birth she faced the dangers

and demons of the river. Now, before her end, she faces those of the desert. As in the beginning where three portions of wealth were given her, here three provisions for her travel are made: "For water blood, her heart for food/and parting's grief her guide" (s.96).

The Thal now blazes forth, putting Sassi's love to a final test:

Chamki aan dopahran vaylay, garmi garm baharay
Tapdi wa wagay asmanun, panchhi mar utaray
Atish da darya khalota, Thal Maru wal charay
Hasham phayr pichhanh nah murdi, lun Hot pukaray

*At noontide then there fiercely blazed
an incandescent heat.*

*From heaven blew a wind which brought
the birds down from the skies.*

*A fiery river then arose
and swept across the Thal.*

*Yet, Hasham, Sassi turns not back,
for Punnun still she cries.*

(s.97)

In the stanza — amongst the finest in the poem — the care and luxury she has been brought up in, is contrasted with the harsh condition she has voluntarily subjected herself to:

nazuk pair gulab sasi day, mehndi nal singaray
Ashiq vekh bahe ik vari, jiu tinhan par varay
Balu ret tape vich Thal day, jiun jaun bhunan bhat-
hiaray
Hasham vekh yaqin sasi da, pher nahin dil haray

*Her delicate and rose-soft feet
made lovelier by henna,
to gain one glimpse of which her lover
would willingly be slain,
were roasted in the desert sand
like barley in the oven.*

*But, Hasham, gaze on Sassi's faith,
unturned by toil or strain.*

(s.98)

The blazing Thal symbolises both the external and the internal suffering. It is the vast stretch of waste as well as the manifestation of the pain of separation. Physically at the mercy of the desert, mentally she is as unforgiving, she accuses herself for Punnun's departure and rubs sand grains into her eyes as penitence. Such exaggeration and intensification of certain traits in human behaviour is an accepted part of romance even in the West¹²⁰. She realizes that she would never see Kech or Bhambhore again. Thal desert is going to be her end. Her physical state now corresponds to the mental:

Kujh digdi kujh dhhandi bahndi, u+hdi tay dum
layndi
Jiyunkar tut sharabun away, phayr utay val vayndi.

*She stumbles now, then trips and falls,
then drawing breath she rises.
She reels as if from drunkenness,
then gets up on her feet.*

(s.102)

A camel's footprint, a sign of her love, provides hope:

Daru dard jigar da karkay, khoj liyah gal lavay
Phir phir la nah sakdi dardi, mut ayh bhi mit javay

*She pressed it to her breast.
Too often, though, she feared to touch it
least it go away.*

(s.104)

However like the mirage she has earlier seen, it leads nowhere.

The utterly forlorn state of Sassi and the natural reaction of a shepherd who, like Atta on seeing Sassi's chest, is afraid and suspicious is juxtaposed to telling effect. The romantic and the realistic meet, if not mix or mingle. Her grief is such that "the very stones dissolved" (s.109). Desperate, she curses the camel:

Jis is uth Punnun nu kharya, mar dozakh val javay
Ya is nainh laggay wich birhun, wang Sassi jal javay
Hasham maut paway karhan nun tukhm zaminon
javay

*'Oh may that camel race to hell
which off with him did speed,
or may it fall in love like me
to be consumed by grief!
May death, oh Hasham, strike those beasts
and wipe out all their seed!'*

(s.109)

But checks herself:

Phir mur samajh karay lakh tauba, bahut bay-
adabi hoi
Jis par yar karay aswary, tis day jeha nah koi.

*'How dared I be so rude?
For who is there to equal him
on whom my lover rides?'*

(s.110)

The print of the camel is of pivotal importance. It is the last sign of her lover. On it she lays her head and passes away. Ironically, Sassi, the moon, bordering on lunacy succumbs to the sun. Her great sacrifice and her mysterious manner of death work a miracle. A watching shepherd turns hermit, abandons all his worldly attachments. He has realised the transience of life. He is enlightened. Unlike the Sindhi version, the shepherd is not seen as villain who accosts a lonely female. There an

agent of evil, here one who points to the ultimate reality of sainthood. This is the only stanza (s.114), which lends itself to a sufi interpretation. It does not harmonize with an overall sufi pattern, but may have been prompted by the urge to distance from the political conditions of the Punjab.

Punnun's reaction, on being informed by Sassi's spirit, is like a true lover's. The fire of love burns him insensible to all except his beloved. Like the shepherd and Sassi he too casts away all human bondage (s.118). His kinsmen try to persuade him but he draws out his knife and threatens them. Another realistic touch. When he reaches the freshly dug grave, it is too much for him:

Sun kay Hot zamin par digya, kha kalayjay kani
Khulh gai gore piya wich qabray, phayr milay dil
jani

*On hearing this the prince collapsed,
love's arrow in his heart.
The grave gaped open, in he fell,
he met with her again.*

(s.124)

Hasham prefers the more accepted end rather than a variant in which Punnun dies but is buried next Sassi's grave¹²¹. Youth and beauty turn to dust reinforcing the truth of the shepherd's perception about life. According his lovers an immortality, Hasham concludes:

Khatir ishq Baluch Sassi da, jug jug rahg kahani.

*But, Hasham, men will tell for ever
the story of these twain.*

(s.124)

Shakespeare also had the same vision about the story of the death of Julius Caesar.

Hasham Shah's world-view is ultimately traditional. Fate affords the framework for human affairs. A recur-

rent motif, it weaves itself into the narrative thread of the poem. At every significant point it becomes visible. Even Adam Jam who tries to shirk the responsibility of fate by casting Sassi away has, ironically, to bow to its demands. The daughter he rejected is assisted in the plan leading to the "disgrace" which prompted his earlier wrath. As for Sassi and Punnun, they are puppets in the hands of fate.

Their world is not one which is a mere mirror of its time nor a representation of reality but "a realization of desire". It derives its authority to quote Northrop Frye "from the integrity of structure"¹²². While the poem satisfies its social responsibilities, at the same time it liberates text and readers from, "the bondage of history". Even in this romance the "myth of concern", in the person of Adam Jam and Punnun's father, is the voice of the community, anxious to preserve continuity and coherence. The lover's gone, the world continues in its tradition-bound ways. The order of things suffers only a minor turmoil at the hands of the lovers. But the poet is an iconoclast. The oppressed female his device.

The female takes precedence in Punjabi romances. Centuries have seen her accorded a role more dynamic than the male. Her stifling social standing provided the poets a convenient persona to voice the injustice, iniquity and intolerance of their milieu. It is she who rebels, who asserts, exerts, who struggles heroically and is capable of taking the final annihilating decision. Sassi, like Hir, Sohni, Sahiban stands for the individual's urge against the morass of the collective will. In order to realize themselves these women, more than their male counterparts in Punjabi, stand and face all opposition. They attempt to remould the world nearer to heart's affection. And fail.

Almost certainly the influence of Hindi poetic tradition where the female lover or devotee wooes her male beloved or Krishna, this practice also extends into Punjabi verse. In mystical verse the mystic, as a female longs for his/her divine beloved, God. In Hasham's

5055/ while the mystical dimension is missing, the Hindi practice remains. Her troubles and travails are the stuff Hasham's romance is made on.

Hasham is reputed to be "the first Punjabi poet to choose his heroine's inner life for the focal point of his poem"¹²³. His heroine's reaction to her real parents, her imprisonment of the traders, her aggressive behaviour towards the tribesmen who dispoil her garden, her argument with her foster-mother and finally her death show a scintillating character. At the same time her psychological shifts, her quiet resolutions, her utter commitment to love, her emotional outbursts and her desperation to achieve her objective, place her amongst the finest creations in Punjabi Literature.

Punnun pales beside her. In the Sindhi version, the emphasis is even. Punnun's affairs are given as much room as his counterpart's. In Punjabi, of a more passive disposition, he is at the disposal of the poet, a subject subservient to the needs of the tale and fate. But together the lovers are representatives of the "myth of freedom". They "articulate the countervailing influence of individuality that resists the authoritarian homogenizing pressures of concern"¹²⁴ such as social barriers, religious discrimination and regional loyalties that the "myth of concern" embodies.

June 84
Lahore.

M. Athar Tahir

NOTES

1. In his *Sayf ul-Maluk*, Shaykh Ghulam Hussayn and Sons, Lahore, 198? p. 489. The last couplet is not available in this edition but is quoted by Jeet Singh Seetal in his *Punjabi Sahit da Alochnatmak Itihas*. Pepsu Book Depot, Patiala, 1974 p. 411. I am grateful to Mr. Asaf Khan for translating relevant passages from the Gurmukhi, to Mr. Sibte al-Hasan Zaigham for making the book available and to Prof. Shuaib bin Hasan for scrutinizing the manuscript with his usual wit and wisdom.
2. For more details see M. Athar Tahir's 'Introduction' to Taufiq Rafat's rendering of *Puran Bhagat* in English. Vanguard Books, 1983.
3. *Puran Bhagat* p. 6.
4. Faqir Muhammad Faqir, *Kukaray*, Punjabi Adabi Academy, Lahore 1960, p. 77, l. 17.
5. Maula Baksh Kushta, *Punjabi Shairan da Tazkira*, Mian Maula Baksh Kushta & Sons, Lahore 1960, p. 41; Serebryakov, *Punjabi Literature*, Progressive Books, Lahore, 1973, p. 46.
6. Lajwanti Rama Krishna, *Punjabi Sufi Poets*, Indus publications, Karachi, 1977 (reprint), p. 89.
7. S.T. Mirza, *Hasham Shah*, Institute of Folk Heritage, Islamabad 1979, pp. 9-10. S.M. M Qadiri, 'Hazrat Sayyid Muhammad Hasham Shah', *Lalan di Pand*, Aziz Book Depot 1973 p. 643 (footnote). He states that these dates are available in a manuscript in the hand of Hasham's son Muhammad Shah. The manuscript has since been published as *Tazkirah Hashimiyya* from Lahore.

8. Harnam Singh Shan, *Sassi Hasham*, Gunpat Rai & Sons, Jullundar, 1959, pp. 236-237. A work of painstaking scholarship, it deals with Hasham Shah's life and his *Sassi* in detail. Mr. M. Asaf Khan obliged by translating passages from the Gurmukhi script for which I am grateful.
9. Ibid., p. 308. For a more detailed study see Jeet Singh Seetal, op. cit., part II pp. 407 onwards.
10. See S.M. Latif, *History of the Punjab*, People's Publishing House, Lahore, 197? pp. 222-353 for details of this period.
11. Ibid., p. 353.
12. Shafi Aqil, *Punjab Rang*, Markazi Urdu Board, Lahore, 1968, p. 74.
13. Krishna, op. cit., p. 89.
14. Mirza, op. cit., pp. 9-10. For another version see Faqir's Introduction to *Kukaray*.
15. Mirza op. cit., p. 10. Shan states he was born in Madinah on 12 Jamadi ul-Awal 1053 A.H./1643, p. 232.
16. Mirza op. cit., p. 10.
17. Kushta op. cit., p. 141; H.S. Hashmi, *Punjabi Abad di Mukhtasar Tarikh*, Taj Book Depot, Lahore 197?, p. 195.
18. Mirza op. cit., p. 11.
19. Kushta op. cit., p. 144; Aqil op. cit., p. 74.
20. Aqil op. cit., p. 74. However, according to Hashmi p. 195, Hasham's descendents refute this

and state that he married only once in his own clan.

21. Kushta, op. cit., p. 143. Kushta on the whole has a fairly romantic notion of Hasham Shah's life and does not seem to have applied his critical faculties.
22. Faqir op. cit., p. 5; Kushta op. cit., p. 142.
23. Kushta op. cit., p. 143; Aqil op. cit., p. 75.
24. Kushta op. cit., p. 143.
25. Hashmi states that he was given two villages, p. 195. Faqir states that the *jagir* of Tharpal was given him for healing Ranjit Singh, p. 4.
26. Mirza op. cit., p. 12.
27. *History of Indigenous Education in the Punjab*, 1983. (Reprinted 1971), Languages Department, Punjab, Patiala, p. 30.
28. Mirza, op. cit., p. 12.
29. Published by Punjab Government, p. 55.
30. Krishna, op. cit., p. 90.
31. Baba Budh Singh, *Bambiha Bol*, p. 162. Quoted by Krishna, op. cit., p. 90.
32. Pritam Singh, Payara Singh Padam, Dr. Roshan Lal Ahuja and Diwan Singh are of the same view. For details see Seetal, op. cit., pp. 407-11.
33. Leitner op. cit., p. ii.
34. Ibid.

35. For a more detailed list see Leitner op. cit., pp. 77-78.
36. For a more detailed list see Leinter op. cit., pp. 85-86.
37. Ibid., p. ii.
38. Such as Mr. Beames and Mr. Ibbetson. See Thomas H. Thornton, 'The Vernacular Literature and Folkore of the Punjab', *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1885, p. 386.
39. Ibid., p. 378.
40. Leitner, op. cit., p. 30.
41. Hashmi, op. cit., p. 194.
42. Ibid.
43. R. Hughes-Buller, *Baluchistan District Gazetteer Series*, Vol V. Scottish Mission Industries Company Ltd. Ajmer. 1907, p. 82.
44. J.S. Trimingham, *The Sufi Orders in Islam*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 233.
45. Shan, op. cit., p. 250-252.
46. Ibid., p. 281.
47. Krishna, op. cit., p. 90.
48. Published by Sheikh Ghulam Ali and Sons, Lahore.
49. Aqil, op. cit., p. 75; Kushta op. cit., p. 144.
50. Hashmi, op. cit., p. 197.

51. Shan, op. cit., pp. 320-21.
52. Mohan Singh, *A History of Punjabi Literature*, Lahore. 193? p. 8.
53. For example Farid Ganji Shakar uses both forms 'کھاسن'/Khasan and 'کھایگا'/Khavayga for future tense of verb 'eat' in the Lahndi; Maulvi Ghulam Rasul uses 'کھاسی'/Khasi of the Doabi/Eastern dialect.
54. *Gazetteer of the Lahore District*, (1883-1884) Punjab Government, p. 55.
55. Ibid.
56. For details see C. Shackle, "Sachal Sarmast and His Siraiki Poetry", *Journal of Medieval Indian Literature*, Vol II, No. 182, Punjabi University, Chandigarh, 1978, p. 91.
57. R.C. Temple, *The Indian Antiquary*, Oct 1882 p. 291.
58. M.M. Gidvani, *Shah Abdul Latif*, The India Society, London p. 27.
59. J.T. Platts, *A Dictionary of Urdu, Classical Hindi and English*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1974, p. 661. Also R.C. Temple, *The Indian Antiquary*, Oct 1882 p. 291.
60. R.C. Temple, *The Indian Antiquary*, Oct 1882, p. 291.
61. M.M. Gidvani, op. cit., p. 27.
62. Ibid., p. 29.
63. Quoted by Temple, *The Indian Antiquary*

Oct., 1882, p. 291.

64. F.A. Khan, *Banbhore*, Department of Archaeology and Museums, Government of Pakistan, 1963, p. 5.
65. M.M. Gidvani, op. cit., p. 29.
66. See Burton's version in *Sindh and the Races that inhabit the valley of Indus*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1973. (reprint of 1851 London edition).
67. R.C. Temple, *The Indian Antiquary*, Oct 1882, p. 291.
68. Quoted by Temple, *The Indian Antiquary*, Oct 1882, p. 291.
69. Burton op. cit., p. 92.
70. F.A. Khan op. cit., p. 31.
71. Banarsi Das Jain, *Punjabi Zaban te ohda Literature*, p. 86.
72. In his *Concise Descriptive Catalogue of the Persian Manuscripts in the collection of the Asiatic Society of Bengal* p. 336, cited by Dr. Muhammad Baqir in *Punjabi Qissas Farsi Zaban Main*, Vol. II, p. 87. For another Persian version see Abd al-Rahman Malik, 'Punjabi ke Manzum Dastanayn', *Tarikh-i Adabiyat Musalmanan-i Pakistan wa Hind*, Vol. XIII p. 366.
73. Baqir, op. cit., p. 4.
74. Ibid., p. 7.
75. According to Qazi Fazal Haq in his book *Majalah Urdu*, October, 1930 p. 724. He also mentions another Persian version by Shahbaz a Muslim Jat of Sialkot District, p. 722. Nur Ilahi and Muhammad

Umar Bunqal in *Majallah Urdu* October, 1929, p. 764 mention Persian versions by Sayyid Muhammad Bhakari in his *mathnavi*, *Husn-o Naz* and Qazi Murtaza Surti in his *mathnavi*, *Shaheed-i Naz*. Quoted by Baqir, p. 84. Ahmad Hussain Qiladari in his article mentions another work based on the legend in Persian, *Tur-i Ishq* by Muhammad Salamat Ali Khan in *mathnavi* form composed in 1313 A.H./1896 and published at Kapurthala in 1901. A fairly long romance, it is modelled on Amir Khusro's *Mathnavi*, *Quran al-Sa'adin*. Starting with a hymn to God, an encomium to the Prophet, he sings of the ascension of the Prophet/ *Miraj*, states the reason for his composition and commences his tale after several digressions. See Baqir, p. 84.

76. H.S. Shan 'The Romance of Sassi-Punnun', *Parkh*, No. 1, 1965, Punjab University Chandigarh p. 48.
77. Cited by R.C. Temple, *The Indian Antiquary* Oct 1882, p. 291.
78. As suggested by H.T. Sorley, *Shah Abdul Latif of Bhit*.
79. Mrs. Postans, *Cutch*, Smith Edler & Co. London, 1839, p. 193.
80. Mrs. Postans refers to them as Soosie and Punnon.
81. *Ibid.*, pp. 199-202.

82. Ibid., p. 193.
83. Ibid., p. 194.
84. *Sindh and the Races that Inhabit the Valley of Indus*, Oxford University Press, Karachi, 1973, (reprint of 1851, London edition).
85. Ibid., p. 57.
86. Ibid.
87. p. 335, W.S. Talbot, 'An Ancient Hindu Temple in the Punjab', *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1903.
88. Ibid., p. 337.
89. He refers to them as Sassui and Punhu.
90. Ibid., pp. 92-106.
91. R. Burton, op. cit., p. 70.
92. Mohan Singh, *A History of Punjabi Literature*, Lahore, 193? p. 6.
93. Ibid., p. 6.
94. Ibid., p. 7.
95. Ibid., p. 6.
96. Ibid., p. 7.
97. Others being the bard proper kept at the court, the priestly repository of the sacred legends of the Hindus and the wandering devotee. This categorization by Temple is cited by Thornton. pp. 381-82.

98. R. Burton, p. 389.
99. R. Burton, p. 57.
100. R.C. Temple, *Legends of the Punjab*, Vol. III, p. xxxviii.
101. These include: Hafiz Barkhurdar (17th-18th Century contemporary of Emperor Aurangzeb), Fageer Raj Muhammad; Munshi Sundar Das Aram (written 1758); Sayyid Waris Shah (1722-1785); Behbal (written 1778); Adit; Maulvi Ahmad Yar (1738-1845); Sayyid Shah Muhammad (1782-1862); Hasham Shah Hafiz; Sayyid Hasham Shah Mukhlas; Lakh Shah (1831?); Maulvi Ghulam Rasul (d. 1873); Sayyid Fazal Shah (1827-1890; written 1863); Fazal Din (written 1882); Ram Chand; Ilahi Baksh (19th Century); Maulana Ghulam Rasul (written 1882); Mian Muhammad Buta (written 1902); Sadhu Sadda Ram; Maula Shah Qadri (written 1313 A.H); Sayyid Mir Husayn (written 1911); Pandit Mohan Lal (written 1938); Mian Sher Muhammad (written 1930s); Natha Singh (printed 1927); Allah Ditta (printed 1933); Sultan Ahmad; Karim Bakhsh; Hashmat Shah Chishti; Hassan; Muhammad Bakhsh; Purnam Singh; Shakar; Indar Singh Maskin; Bhai Channan Singh; Jiswant Singh; Chiragh Din (d. 1950); Muhammad Ramzan Khokhar (printed 1926); Kishwar Chand; Mir Husayn; Khawahish Ali; Muhammad Baksh Farshi; Milkhi Ram; Ahmad Din; Khuda Bakhsh Sabbar; Nur Muhammad; Muhammad Bakhsh; Miraj ud-Din Baydum; Munshi Abdul Hamid Turki; Nur ud-Din (printed 1855); Sayyid Akbar Shah (written & printed 1910); Rikhi Singh; Abdul Karim; Ghulam; Teja Singh (prose, written 1932); S.S. Amol (prose, written 1932); Surinder Singh Kohli (prose, written 1944); Muhammad Abdullah; Mir Rahmat Ullah Rahmat; Mian Muhammad Din Safri (published 1933); Maula Shah; Malik Mu-

hammad Din Dardi; Bhai Mit Singh (written 1912); Maulvi Muhammad Hafizullah Qurayshi Naqshbadi (written 1920); Hakim Hafiz Fazal Ilahi (written 1932); Bhagat Bakhshi; Sayyid Fazal Shah of Nawan Kot Lahore; Lakhu; Saywa Singh; Kahir Singh; Ghulam Hayder Mastana (197?); Amrita Pritam (prose, written 1957); Gurbaksh Singh Preet Lari (prose, written 1956); See Shan op. cit., pp. 129-145; Banarse Das Jain in his *Punjabi Zaban tay uhda Literature*, p. 86, also lists Mehr Singh and Sakin Seekha of the Patiala State. Ahmad Hussain Qiladari lists 30 poets in his book *Panjabi Abad di Mukhtasar Tarikh* who composed on the romance. For the Panjabi text of Aram's version composed in 1171 A.H., see *Oriental College Magazine*, Lahore, August and November 1927.

102. Quoted in Mirza, op. cit., p. 9.
103. Quoted in Mirza, op. cit., p. 8.
104. Temple, op. cit., Vol. III, p. 24.
105. Ibid.
106. See Richard M. Dorson, *Folklore and Fakelore*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Mass. 1976 p. 134.
107. 'Sage', as defined by Olrik, is virtually an all-inclusive term and is meant to incorporate such forms as folktale, myth, legend, and folksong. Alan Dundes, *The Study of Folklore*, Prentice Hall Inc. Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 1965, p. 129. See pp. 129-141 for the discussion of laws.
108. The Law of Opening and Closing (*das Gesetz des Einganges und des Abschlusses*) is faithfully followed. His romance like the original begins by moving from calm to excitement, from the birth

of Sassi to her being cast in the river and ends by moving from excitement to calm, Punnun's departure and the death of the two lovers.

The Law of Repetition (*das Gesetz des Wiederholung*), however, is not used. His narrative is not repetitious but proceeds with classic brevity shorn of all adornment. Thus the tension which is built and the need to fill out the body of the narrative is not fulfilled by repetition but by a dramatic tension between the characters. This is particularly evident in dialogues between characters.

The Law of Three (*das Gesetz des Dreizahl*) is followed to the extent that Sassi is given three portions of wealth by her father when cast in the river. But the number three does not acquire any significance that number twelve does in Qadir Yar's *Puran Bhagat*. The Law of Two to a Scene (*das Gesetz des Scenischen Zweiheit*) is also observed through out the poem. Even when the washermen-suitors approach Adam Jam, they do so as one voice.

The Law of Contrast (*das Gesetz des Gegensatzes*) is observed when the pride of Adam Jam is balanced by the kindness of the washerman, the anger of Punnun's father by Punnun's disobedience, Punnun's abduction by his return to Sassi's grave and the shepherd's human response to Sassi's miraculous end. This Law however, is far more sharply evident in the Sindhi version in which Sassi, the innocent, faces the machinations of the evil Bhagula the goldsmith's wife, the helpful Babiho, the banyan, is balanced by the villain Lallu. The Law of Single Strand (*die Einstrangigkeit*) is fundamental to Hasham Shah's version whereas in that recorded by Burton there are several strands such as the involvement of Punnun

with Sehjan and Bhagula which impede the progress of the tale but make it more interesting.

The Logic of the Sage (*die Logik der Sage*) is very strictly controlled by Hasham Shah and the tendency towards miracle and magic which constitutes its fundamental law is seen in the three important places when the mountain opens and Sassi is buried, when her death is communicated by a spirit to Punnun and when the hill opens once again, for Punnun's end.

The Unity of Plot (*die Cinheit der Handlung*) is perhaps more strictly observed in Hasham Shah than in the Kutch and Sindh versions. The poet constantly reminds one of the ordained fate. Concentration on the leading Character (*die Konzentration um die Hauptperson*) is evident throughout the story. The initial stanzas on Adam Jam provide Sassi both with a noble birth as well as means by which she can oblige the visit of Punnun by using royal guards. Neither the Law of Twins (*des Gesetz des Zwillinge*) nor that of the Importance of Initial and Final Position (*das Achtergewicht*), play any significant part in the story.

109. See *Miraj Namah*, lines 1733 and 1969, Malik Bashir Ahmad, Lahore, 1981. Also see *Puran Bhagat*, p. 6.

110. Motif number M. 340-3. See Stith Thompson *Motif Index of Folk literature*, Indiana University Press, Bloomington, 1955.

111. R.C. Temple, *The Legends of the Punjab* Vol. iii: Education Society's Press, Bombay. p. lvi.

112. Ibid., p. li.

113. See motifs L 111.2.1 and S 141 in Thompson's

Motif Index of Folk Literature.

114. The motif of pride with fatal consequences is a recurrent feature in legends of the Punjab and the Indus valley and fundamental to many a folk characters. See M. Athar Tahir's 'Introduction' to *Puran Bhagat*, p. 7.
115. Motifs number T 11.1 and T 11.11.2 respectively see S. Thompson.
116. R.C. Temple contends that the "tribe of the Hots can have had no connection with the tale and the name is a modern interpolation". *Legends of the Punjab* Vol. III, p. 24 (footnote). However he does not specify his reasons.
117. I am grateful to Mr. Mohammad Tahir Chaudhry for this information.
118. Ruth Finnegan, *Oral Poetry*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 21.
119. Ibid., p. 28.
120. See G. Beer, *The Romance*, Methuen, London, 1970, for a more detailed discussion.
121. Baqir, op. cit. p. 7.
112. In his *The Myth of Deliverance*. Cited by David Scott Kastan in his review in the *Times Literary Supplement* of Feb. 17, 1984, p. 163.
123. Serebrayakov, op. cit., p. 56.
124. D.S. Kastan op. cit., p. 163.

حکمت اوس خداوند والی ، مالک ملک ملک دا
 لاکھ کروڑ کرن چترائیاں کوئی پہچان نہ سکدا
 قدرت نال رہے سرگرداں ، دائم چرخ فلک دا
 ہاشم خوب ہوئی گلکاری ، فرش فناہ خلق دا

حکمت نال حکیم اجل دے ، نقش نگار بنایا
 ہر ارواح اسیر عشق دا ، قید جسم وچ پایا
 جو مخلوق نہ باہر اُس تھیں ، ارض سما وچ آیا
 ہاشم جوش بخار عشق دے ، ہر اک شان وٹایا

حسن کلام جو شاعر کر دے ، سخن نہ سا تھیں آیا
 جہاک عقل شعور اساڈا ، اساں بھی آکھ سنایا
 سن سن ہوت سستی دیاں باتاں ، کامل عشق کمایا
 ہاشم جوش طبیعت کیتا ، وہم اتے ول آیا

PROLOGUE

1.

The wisdom of Almighty God,
the Lord of earth and sky,
contrives a hundred million works
beyond our observation.
Revolving ever by His power
remains the wheel of heaven,
beneath which lies embroidered, Hasham,
the carpet of creation.

2.

All forms and shapes are fashioned by
the skill of fate's wise Lord,
who's made each soul love's prisoner,
inside the body chained,
for all that lives lies under love
on earth and in the heavens.
Through passion's fever, Hasham, is
all honour lost and gained.

3.

The noble language poets use
I find to be beyond me,
but with what talents I possess
this story have I told.
By hearing many tales of Sassi's
and Punnun's perfect love
was Hasham, keenly stirred at heart,
to try his hand made bold.

آدم جام بھنبھور شہر دا، صاحب تخت کہاوے
 وحش طیور جنات آدم، ہر اک ریس نواوے
 جاہ جلال سکندر والا، خاطر مول نہ لیاوے
 ہاشم آکھ زبان نہ سکدی، کون تعریف سناوے

شہر بھنبھور مکان الہی، باغ بہشت بنایا
 فرش فروش چمن گل بوٹا، ہر ہر ذات لگایا
 ندیاں حوض تالاب چو طرفوں، رل مل خوب سہایا
 ہاشم روح ہے رچ پھسیا، دام فریب وچھایا

امیر وزیر غلام کروڑاں، لشکر فوج خزانے
 بیرک سرخ نشان ہزاراں، شام گھٹا شمیمانے
 کھاوَن خیر فقیر مسافر، صاحب ہوش دوانے
 ہاشم ایس غمی وچ عاجز، ہوس اولاد نہ خانے

ADAM JAM'S CHILDLESSNESS

4.

The city of Bhambhore was ruled
by royal Adam Jam.

All birds and beasts, all jinn and men
bowed down their heads to him.

Great Alexander's mighty state
was nothing in his eyes.

Since Hasham's tongue cannot speak here
who shall his praises hymn?

5.

He made Bhambhore a wondrous place
to rival Paradise.

He had laid out in verdant gardens
fair plants of every kind.

Canals and lakes surrounded it
to make a lovely sight,

whose many beauties, Hasham, snared
the hearts of all mankind.

6.

Viziers and nobles served him with
vast hosts of slaves and soldiers.

His scarlet banners filled the sky
like clouds which promise rain.

His charity fed all in need,
the sober and the mad.

But, Hasham, since he had no child,
his heart was filled with pain.

خواہشِ اکس اولاد ہمیشاں، پیر شہید مناوے
 دے لباسِ پُشاک برہنیاں، بھکیاں طعام کھلاوے
 دیکھ اجاڑ مسافر کارن تال سراں پواوے
 ہاشم کرس جہان دُعائیں آس سائیں لیاوے

دُرِ یتیم صدف وچ آیا، سنی پکارِ دلاں دی
 پھری بہارِ شکوفے والی، ہوئی اُمید گلاں دی
 چھج معقول ہوئی ابر شمیم، آہی سخت سولاں دی
 ہاشم دیکھ ہوئی گل لالہ، ہوگ بہار گلاں دی

سستی جہنم لیا شبِ قدے، مثلِ ہلالِ درفشِاں
 دیکھ بے آب ہون نگ موقی، مانک لعل بدخشِاں
 عقل خیال قیاسوں باہر، نظر کرے دل نقشِاں
 ہاشم اکھ تعریفِ حُسن دی، شمسِ مثالِ زر افشِاں

7.
 In yearning for a single child
 he prayed to saints and martyrs.
 He clothed and dressed the bare and naked
 and gave the hungry food.
 For travellers in the wilderness
 he built serais and pools.
 For him, oh Hasham, all men prayed,
 'May God his hopes make good!'

THE BIRTH OF SASSI

8.
 At last these heartfelt cries were heard—
 a pearl formed in the shell.
 The buds of spring could now be seen,
 arousing hopes of flowers.
 It seemed a lovely couch of silk
 but was a bed of thorns.
 Yet, Hasham, soon with blooms the spring
 will fill the garden's bowers.

9.
 Upon the noble Night of Power
 was moon—bright Sassi born.
 Before her seemed quite lustreless
 all pearls and rubies red,
 while mind and thought were quite confounded
 by her lovely form.
 Her beauty, Hasham, dulled the rays
 which by the sun are shed.

جہل جہان ہوئی خوشحالی ، پھر یا نیک — زمانہ
 نوبت ناچ شمار نہ کوئی ، دُھرپت تال ترانہ
 کر سروار سُٹن زر سونا ، ہوز جواہر خانہ
 ہاشم خیر کیتا فقراواں ، ملک مُعاش خزانہ

اہل نجوم سدے اُس ویلے ، حفظ توریث ربانی
 صاحب یمن کرامت والے ، خبر دین اسمانی
 دیکھن عمر نصیب سستی دے ، کھوٹ کلام ربانی
 ہاشم بھار سستی سر ڈاڈھا ، ہوگ شتاب اسانی

دیکھ نجوم کتاب نجومی ، ہو رہے چپ سارے
 ظالم حکم سہم سلطاناں ، کون کوئی دم مارے
 بادشاہاں سچ آکھن اوکھا ، ہوئے لاچار وچارے
 ہاشم بخت خیل سستی دے کون چتے کون ہارے

10.

The world was filled throughout with joy,
 good times had come again.
 The drums beat out, folk danced and danced,
 sweet songs were sung in measure.
 In dedication gold was thrown,
 whole jewel—stores were emptied,
 and, Hasham, to the poor were given
 estates and wealth and treasure.

SASSI'S FATE IS FORETOLD

11.

Astrologers were summoned then,
 the Torah on their tongues,
 possessed of supernatural powers,
 to tell of heaven's decrees.
 They looked at Sassi's life and fortune,
 opening their scriptures.
 See, Hasham, though her burden's hard,
 she'll soon be granted ease.

12.

The star—men checked their almanacs
 but uttered not a word.
 In fear of royal punishment
 none dared to tell their news.
 The truth is hard to tell to kings,
 the wretched men were helpless.
 Oh Hasham, Sassi's fate is cruel —
 who'll win here, who will lose?

شاہ دوبار کہیا چُپ کیہی، کہو جواب کیہہ آوے
 عرض کیہی دوبار اساتھیں، سُخن کلام نہ آوے
 اس زبان نہ آکھن جوگی، جھوٹھ ایمان جلاوے
 ہاشم کرن لگاؤ بھیرا، قسمت کون مٹاوے

اوڑک خوف اُتار نجومی، بات کہی من بھانی
 عاشق ہوگ کمال سستی، جد ہوگ جوان سیانی
 مست بیہوش تھلاں رُچ مری، درد فراق رنجانی
 ہاشم داغ لگاؤگ گل نوں، رہگ جہان کہانی

سُن تقریر ہوئے دل بُریاں، مان پو پو خوش قبیلہ
 آتش چمک اُٹھی ہر دل نوں، جیونکر تیل فیلہ
 خوشی خراب ہوئی وچ غم دے، زرد ہو یا رنگ پیلہ
 ہاشم بیٹھ دناؤ سیانے، ہور وچارن جیلہ

13.

Then twice the king said, 'Why this silence?
Pray, what is your answer?'

And twice they humbly answered him,

'This news how can we state?

How can our tongues pronounce the truth?

Yet lies destroy all faith.'

So, Hasham, long they hummed and hawed,
but who may counter fate?

14.

At last they put aside their fears

and answered as they wished,

'A faultless lover will she be

when she's a maiden young.

Then in the desert will she die

by parting's sorrow slain.

Yet, Hasham, though her kin be shamed
her story will be sung.'

THE DECISION TO CAST SASSI AWAY

15.

These words inspired with burning grief
her parents, kin and tribe.

In each one's heart there blazed a fire
like oil that's set aflame.

Despondency destroyed their joy
as pale they turned and wan.

The elders met in council, Hasham,
some remedy to frame.

بے اعتبار ہویا ہستہ دھوتے، باپ امید مُرادوں
 ظالم رُپ ہویا دل اُس دُا، سخت سیاہ جلا دوں
 دُوبگ ننگ نموس کیہ حاصل، ایس ملیت اولادوں
 ہاشم خرچ کروں سرمایا، فارغ ہوو فسادوں

کیا وزیر کیہ دوش سسی نوں، لکھیا لکھ لکھاری
 بے تفصیر کھا دن کتیا، نشٹ ہووے گل ساری
 اس تھیں پاپ نہ ہو پر پیے، قوم ہووے ہتھاری
 ہاشم پار صندوق رُٹھاو، مول چکے خر خواری

فرش زمیں پر ہر اک تائیں، ماں پو بہت پیارا
 سو پھر آپ رُٹھا دن جس نوں، ویکھ گناہ نکارا
 دھن اوہ صاحب سرجن ہارا، عجیب چھپا دن ہارا
 ہاشم جے اوہ کرے عدالت، کون کرے نِسارا

16.

Her father now despaired to see
fulfilment of his hopes.

With heart more sombre than a hangman's
severe became his will.

'What shall be gained save loss of honour
from this my unclean child?

Come, Hasham, make an end of her
that we be freed from ill.'

17.

The king's vizier said, 'Why blame Sassi?

The Writer wrote her fate.

To have this guiltless maiden killed
would ruin all her kin.

Can any greater sin exist
than cruelty to one's kin?

So, Hasham, float her in a chest —
all shame will go therein.'

18.

Since all who dwell on this broad earth
hold dear their parents' name,

for them to cast their children out
is clear abomination.

How blessed, though, is God the Maker,
the Hider of all sins!

Oh Hasham, when He sits in judgment
who shall gain salvation?

واہ کلام نصیب سستی دے ، نام لیاں دل ڈردا
 تختوں چار سٹے سلطان خیر پے در در دا
 بیل غریب ناقابل جیہا ، چار زمیں سر دھردا
 ہاشم جار نہ بولن والی ، جو چاہے سو کردا

جس استاد صندوق سستی دا ، گھڑیا نال قہر دے
 افلاطون ارسطو جیہے ، ہون شکر دہنزدے
 زینت زیب سکھے سبھ اُس تھیں دلبر چمن مصر دے
 ہاشم دیکھ آرائش کردا ، شالبش عقل فکر دے

چندن شاخ منگار کد اہوں ، بیٹھ کارگیر گھڑیا
 بوٹا ویل سنہری کر کے ، نعل جواہر جڑیا
 پار زنجیر چو پھیر پنجر نوں ، بیٹھ بے درداں کڑیا
 ہاشم دیکھ تولد ہندی ، آن دکھاں لڑ پھڑیا

19.

How dreadful was the fate of Sassi,
 which I fear to tell.
 Down from their thrones He tosses kings
 to beg from door to door,
 till feebler than exhausted oxen
 they raise no more their heads.
 Be silent, Hasham — only know
 His will is done for sure.

SASSI'S VOYAGE IN THE CHEST

20.

Now from the master who for Sassi
 built a chest with skill
 would Plato or wise Aristotle
 all artistry have learned.
 The beauties of the East took each
 adornment's art from him.
 See, Hasham, with what craftsmanship
 each piece he makes is turned.

21.

A block of sandal was procured,
 on which the master wrought
 entwining arabesques of gold,
 bejewelled and begemmed.
 But fixing chains about her breast
 they bound her cruelly.
 See, Hasham, though new born, she is
 to suffering condemned.

کر تدبیر کہتے ترے چھانڈے، خرچ دتا کرنا لے
 تس دی ہلک ہو یا اک چھانڈا، شیر پلاؤن والے
 دوجا راج دیج سستی نوں، ہو ر پڑھاؤن والے
 ہاشم لکھ تعویذ حقیقت، حرف سستی گل ڈالے

پار صندوق رڑھائی سستی، نوح طوفان وگیندا
 باشک ناگ نہ ہاتھ لیاوے، دھول پناہ منگیندا
 پار ارار بلائیں بھریا، دانو دیو ڈریندا
 ہاشم دیکھ نصیب سستی دے، کیہ کچھ ہو کر کریندا

تریا توڑ زنجیر صبر دا، چائیاں رزق مہاراں
 گردش فلک ہو یا سرگرداں، باجھ کلاح قہاراں
 سورج تیز ہو یا جل خونی، پین لساں چمکاراں
 ہاشم دیکھ سستی وچ گھیری، دشمن لاکھ ہزاراں

22.

Three shares of wealth were carefully planned
to be provision for her.

One was to nourish her with milk,
for him to whom she came,
the second was to be her dowry,
the third was for her schooling.

Then, Hasham, all the facts were written
in a locket's frame.

23.

Adrift they cast her in the chest.

A storm like Noah's blew,
beyond the World-snake's power to bear —
the Earth-bull too sought quarter,
as on both banks dread spectres stalked,
grim devils and fierce demons.

Behold, oh Hasham, Sassi's fate —
where will it now transport her?

24.

Without restraint the chest sped on,
unleashed to roam by fate.

It spun beneath the turning skies,
unguided and unsteered.

The blazing sun of scarlet waters
shed its scorching rays,
while, Hasham, foes on every side
around poor Sassi reared.

آدم خور جناور بِل دے، راکش رُوپ سَجھائیں
 ناگر مچھ کُتے جِلھوڑے، ناگ سَنسار بلائیں
 تندوئے قہر زنبور بُلھیناں، لاوَن زور تداہیں
 ہاشم موت ہووَس وِچ تھَل دے مارِس کون اِٹھائیں

گھمَن گھیر چو پھیر یوں گھیرن، بٹھاٹھاں لین کلاوے
 لہراں زور کرن ہر طرفوں، اک آوے اک جاوے
 صورت سحر صندوق جڑاؤ، بجلی چمک ڈراوے
 ہاشم چاہ جوئیں کنعانی، دیکھ صندوق چھپاوے

شہرں دُور کُ پتن دھوبی، دھوندا ندی کنائے
 انا نام مثال فرشتہ، بزرگ نیک ستارے
 دُٹھا اوس صندوق دُراڈا، دل وِچ خوف چٹارے
 ہاشم گیوس عقل دماغوں، دیکھ صندوق ستارے

25.

Man-eating creatures of the deep,
 all of demonic shape,
 sea-snakes and serpents, monstrous mermen,
 and alligators vile,
 ferocious hornets, dragons, dolphins
 sought to wreak their terror.
 Since, Hasham, in the Thal she'll die,
 who'll slay her here meanwhile?

26.

As round the chest the eddies whirled
 the stream embraced it tight.
 From all directions beat the waves,
 one fast upon another.
 Though on its finely fashioned surface
 fearful lightning flashed,
 yet safe she lay as Joseph, Hasham,
 who in the well found cover.

SASSI'S RESCUE BY ATTA

27.

Outside the town a washerman
 was washing on the bank,
 a good and holy man called Atta,
 who was by fortune blessed.
 He saw it float a good way off
 and fear rose in his heart,
 for, Hasham, he was quite confounded
 by that glittering chest.

کے خیال جواہر خانہ ، پیاسے آن تباسی
 یا کوئی آفت رُٹھی پہاڑوں ، یا اسرار الہی
 بخت بیدار ہوئے تُو دیتا ، آن نصیب اُگا ہی
 ہاشم جابر پیاجل ڈونگھے ، ہو دل شیر سپاہی

اتے خوب کیتی چند بازی ، لیا صندوق کنائے
 شاد ہو یا ذات خداوند ، نعمت شکر گزارے
 دیا شہر مبارک دیون ، رل مل یار پیارے
 ہاشم مال لیا ہو ر دوجا ، ہو یا ثواب بچارے

لکھا آن نصیب اتے دا ، کرم بھلے دن آئے
 جڑت جڑا محلات کیتے ، شوکت شان بنائے
 دشتکار غلام سسی دے ، نوکر چار رکھائے
 ہاشم باغ سگے رب چاہئے پل وچ چار سہائے

28.
 He thought, 'Is this some jewel-store
 now fallen into ruin?
 Or some dread thing which strangely here
 has from the hills cascaded?'
 His destiny awoke within him
 and luck gave him support.
 Unfearing, Hasham, like a lion
 into the deep he waded.

29.
 Right well did Atta risk his life
 to bring the chest to shore.
 Delighted, to Almighty God
 thanksrendering he made.
 Then as he hastened back to town
 his friends all wished him joy.
 See, Hasham, how with wealth and riches
 the good man was repaid.

30.
 For better had his fortunes changed,
 he found prosperity.
 A handsome set of buildings fine
 he had designed with skill,
 then slaves for Sassi he engaged
 and many servants too.
 So soon the driest gardens, Hasham,
 bloom if God so will.

سُستی ہوئی جوان سیمانی، سُورج جوت سوانی
 صاحبِ علم حیارِ حلیمی، عقل ہنر چست رانی
 ماں پیو ویکھ کارِ نگر کوئی، چاہن کیتی کڑمائی
 ہاشم سُنی سستی مصلاحت، بخیرت ہوس سوانی

بن بن پیچ پنچایت دھوبی، پاس آتے دے آون
 کر تمثیل دہارِ جکت دا، بات ہمیش چلاون
 دھیاں سوہن نہیں گھر پاپیاں، جے لکھ راج کماون
 ہاشم وانگ تجھارت دھوبی، بات سستی دل لیاون

اک دن کول سستی دے ماں پیو، بیٹھ کیتے مکھ جھیرے
 آکھ بچہ توں بالغ ہوویوں، واگ تیری ہمتھ تیرے
 دھوبی ذات اُچی گھر آون، پھر پھر جان بھیرے
 ہاشم کون تیرے من بھاوے، آکھ سُنا سویرے

DISCUSSION OF SASSI'S BETROTHAL

31.

In time a maiden she became
more lovely than the sun,
well-schooled, of mild and modest temper,
sensible and skilled.

Her foster-parents sought some craftsman,
wishing to betroth her,
but, Hasham, when she heard their plans
with pique was Sassi filled.

32.

The council of the washermen
together came to Atta.

Referring to the common practice
they often would aver,
'No daughter should be kept at home
however rich it be.'

Through hints and riddles, Hasham, thus
they steered their talk to her.

33.

One day her parents came to Sassi
to sit and reason with her.

'Speak now, dear child, you are of age,
your hands now hold the rein.

These washermen of high caste come,
yet all are turned away.

Say, Hasham, which one pleases you,
come soon and tell us plain.'

سستی مَول جواب نہ کیتا ، نال پیو شرمندی
 دل وچ سوز ہوئی پُر آنسو، دیکھ لکھی کرماں دی
 دھونڈن ساک جھڑوئے جید دا، میں دھی بادشہاں دی
 ہاشم پھیر نہ ناؤں لیونے، دیکھ سستی درمندی

شرکت نال شریک اُتے دے، مردخیل فساد دی
 پاس بھنبھور شہر دے والی، جار ہوئے فریادی
 ہوئی جوان اُتے گھر بیٹی، صورت شکل شہزادی
 ہاشم کہیا پکار بخیللاں، لالچ اوہ تِساڈی

بھیبیا نفر غلام اُتے نوں، آدم جام بُلایا
 سستی کھوٹھ تعویذ گلے دا، شاہ حضور پُچایا

کانغہ واچ پچھتا جہڑا، پار صندوق رُٹھایا
 ہاشم دیکھ ہويا شرمندہ، آدم جام سَوایا

ہو گرم ہو یا دل بُریاں ، پھیر اولاد پساری
 ماں پیو نال سستی دے چاہن ، بات کیتی اک واری
 سستی صاف جواب دتو نے ، کھوٹ حقیقت ساری
 ہاشم ملن حرام تُسانوں ، روڑھ دتی اک واری

ماؤں فراق سستی دے مارے ، نیند آرام نہ کرے
 ہر دم دانگ معقوب پیغمبر ، رو رو حال و نجات
 کرے سوال لوٹے گھر کھڑیا ، رُز سستی تھیں آوے
 ہاشم یار صندوق سستی نوں خاطر مول نہ لیاوے

بل تھل مشرق مغرب ہر شے ، جس دا نام دھیکے
 صاحب قدرت آپر اپارا ، کس مُونہ نال سلاہوے
 انت نہ پار اُرار تسی دا ، کیہ کچھ آکھ سُناوے
 ہاشم پھیر سستی نوں ملساں ، ہُن بات پُوں دل آوے

37.

His blood grew hot with burning grief
for his dear long-lost child.

Both Sassi's parents longed to see her
and sent a message swift.

Outright, though, Sassi thus refused them
mincing not her words,

oh Hasham, 'You will I not meet
who once cast me adrift.'

38.

Her mother stricken by her absence
found neither rest nor sleep,

but like the Prophet Jacob ever
wept and grieved distraught.

To ask her back a messenger
was sent to Sassi daily

but, Hasham, mindful of the chest
she gave them not a thought.

39.

On land and sea, in east and west,
all things dwell on His name.

By whom shall earth's unbounded Lord
be properly extolled?

What can one tell of Him who has
no end or boundary?

To Sassi, Hasham, we'll return —
let Punnun's tale be told.

شہر بجنہور سوداگر زادہ ، غزنی نام سداوے
 صاحب شوق عمارت تازی ، باغ ہمیش بناوے
 تس وچ ہر بادشاہ ملک دی ، کر تصویر لکھاوے
 ہاشم ہر اک آپ مضمور ، جب اسرائیل کہاوے

سستی سن تعریف ہمیشاں لائق مُشک ختن دی
 اک دن نال سیاں اٹھ دوڑی خاطر سیر چمن دی
 دیکھیا نقش و نگار کھڑوتا ، صورت سیم بدن دی
 ہاشم دیکھ ہوئی دل گھائل ، وانگوں کوہ شکن دی

سستی کہیا بکرا مضمور ، شائبش ویر بھراؤ
 جس صورت دی مورت کیتی ، مینوں اکھ سناؤ
 کھڑا شہر کون شہزادہ ، تھاؤں مکان بناؤ
 ہاشم پھر سستی ہتھ جوڑے ، ٹھیک پتہ دس جاؤ

PUNNUN'S PICTURE

40.

There was a merchant in Bhambhore
who bore the name of Ghazni.

His chief delight it was his garden
with wonders fresh to fill.

Of each land's ruler had he there
a likeness well portrayed.

Each painter, Hasham, justly could
assert his heavenly skill.

41.

Now Sassi heard it was as fine
as Khotan's fabled musk.

With her companions off she went
its marvels to regard.

When there she saw portrayed a youth
of lovely face and form,
struck was she, Hasham, by the wound
which once laid low Farhad.

42.

She called the painters to her saying,

'Your work is fine indeed,

but who is this you've painted here?

Just tell me, all of you,

who is this prince, and where's his city?

Tell me his abode.'

How humbly, Hasham, did she ask,

'I beg you, tell me true!'

یکچم شہر ولایت تھل دی، ہوت علی تس والی
 تس داپت پُنوں شہزادہ عجیب ثوابوں خالی
 صورت اوس حسابوں باہر، صفت خداوند والی
 ہاشم عرض کیتی استادان چنگ لکھاں وچ ڈالی

ہو دل گھائل نال سیاں دے، پھیر سستی گھر آئی
 نیندر جھکھ زلیخاں وانگوں، پہلی رمز و نجائی
 دیکھ احوال ہوئی دراندی، بھید پچھائیس مائی
 ہاشم باجھ کٹھی ہتھیاراں، عشق ظالم سپا ہی

دل وچ سوز فراق پُنوں دا، رُز الٹیا بلے
 آتش آپ آپ بھٹھیارا، آپ جلیاں نت جالے
 برے درد آرام نہ دیندا، وانگ چھزنت جالے
 ہاشم پھر کیا سکھ سوون، جد پیتے پریم پیالے

43.

'In Kecham city in the Thal
Hot Ali rules as king,
and Punnun is his son, a prince
who has no fault or flaw.

He's fair beyond all reckoning,
in qualities divine.'

Their words, oh Hasham, fired her heart
like sparks that fall on straw.

44.

Heart-smitten, with her girl-companions
Sassi then came home,
where love forbade her eat or sleep,
as once it had Zulaikha.

Her nurse enquired her secret, sad
to see her in such pain.

But, Hasham, love the cruel warrior
needs no arms to slay her.

45.

Now every day away from Punnun
makes her love blaze fiercer.

Herself the fire, herself the stoker,
her flames she ever fans.

Allowed no rest by cruel absence
like a pyre she burns,
for, Hasham, none who've tasted love
can sleep on soft divans.

دے دل ڈاڈھ سستی کردانش ، اک تدبیر بنائی
 پتن گھاٹ لئے سبھ پیوتھوں ، چوکی چار بٹھائی
 پانڈھی راہ مُسافر جے کوئی ، آوے ایس نواحی
 ہاشم پار ارار نہ جاوے ، میں بن خبر پُچائی

برس ہو یا جد پھیر سستی نوں ، محنت زُہد اٹھائے
 کچھ دلوں رل مال دیہا جن ، اوٹھ سوداگر آئے
 صورت ناز نیاز بلوچیاں ، دیکھ پری بھل جائے
 ہاشم دیکھ بلوچ زلیخاں ، یوسف چار بھلائے

آکھیا آن غلام سستی نوں ، نال زبان پیاری
 گھاٹ اُتے اک راہ مُسافر، اُتے آن پیاری
 کچھ دلوں رل آکھن آئے اٹھ بے انت شماری
 ہاشم طور لباس پہراوا ، ہر ہر چال نیاری

SASSI'S CAPTURE OF A BALOCH CARAVAN

46.

With firm resolve did Sassi form
a cunning stratagem.

She asked her father that the fords
by her should be controlled.

At each she placed her guards and said
'Whoever comes this way
shall not have leave to cross, oh Hasham,
till I have been told.'

47.

A twelvemonth thus did Sassi spend
in anxious waiting, till
from Kech on camels came some merchants,
whose thoughts on trade were bent.
No room was there to dream of fairies
when they came into view —
yes, Hasham, from Zulaikha's heart
would Joseph have been sent!

48.

To Sassi then there came a slave
who told her this sweet news,
'A merchants' caravan has come
with camels numberless.
When questioned at a certain ford
they said they came from Kech.
Exotic, Hasham, seem their ways
and strange their garb and dress.'

سستی سخت غمی وچ آہی ، درد فراق رنجانی
 ناکچھ سُرَت اواز بدن وچ ، ناکچھ ہوش ٹکائی
 روح رُوحاں وچ پھرے سستی دا ، ملک الموت نشانی
 ہاشم مثل بلوچ مسیحا ، پھیر دتی زندگانی

سُنی اواز سستی اٹھ بیٹھی ، سُرَت سریرِ نبھالی
 مثل انار ہوئے رُخسائے ، پھیر پھری لب لالی
 ہار سنکار لگے من بھاؤن ، خوب ہوئی خوشحالی
 ہاشم آکھ تعریف بلوچاں ، آب حیات پیالی

شہر اتار بلوچ سستی نے ، خدمت خوب کرائی
 حال حقیقت ہوت پُنوں دی ، پاس بہال چھپائی
 خاطر لو بھ کہیو نے ساڈا ، ہوت پُنوں ہے بھائی
 ہاشم ویکھ بلوچاں دتی ، شامت آن دکھائی

49

In deepest grief had Sassi sunk,
 tormented by his absence.
 Her voice and body ceased their function
 and senseless was her brain.
 Her soul had mingled with those souls
 against whom Death takes aim.
 The tribesmen, Hasham, now like Jesus
 give her life again.

50

But this report made Sassi rise
 regathering her senses.
 Her cheeks grew pomegranate-red,
 her lips regained their glow.
 In ornaments she found delight
 and she knew joy again.
 Come Hasham, praise the tribesmen who
 life's elixir bestow

51

She lodged the merchants in the town
 and had them cared for well.
 She asked them news of Punnun then
 and sat them by her side.
 They hoped for gain and said to her,
 'Hot Punnun is our kin.
 But, Hasham, see how shamefully
 their hopes were mortified.

سُنی سمجھ بھرار پُنوں دے، قید بکوج کرائے
ہون خلاص محال ہوئی نے، ہوت پُنوں بن آئے
بول وگاڑ پچھے کچھتاون، شامت آن پھہائے
ہاشم باجھ وکیلوں کامل، پھسیاں کون چھڈائے

دوسر دار آہے کروانی، ہفت ہزار شتر دے
بن نام بیہا دونویں، بیٹھ اندیشہ کر دے
پُنوں باجھ نہیں چھٹکارا، حوض دیئے بھر زردے
ہاشم زور کیا پر ملکیں، مان ہوئے مچ گھر دے

اڈن کھٹولا نام کر ہے دا، نال کیتا ہمراہی
بن ہو اسوار سدھایا، کیچ بنے بن راہی
جیوں جیوں بہت پئے مچ منزل تیوں تیوں چال سوائی
ہاشم اوہ پُنوں پر آہا، عاشق شوق الہی

52.

For Sassi thought them Punnun's kin
 and had them all imprisoned.
 Till Punnun came himself, for them
 no freedom would there be.
 For their loud words they grieved too late,
 now victims of disgrace.
 Besides the Perfect Pleader, Hasham,
 who may set us free?

HELP IS SOUGHT FROM KECH

53.

The leaders of the caravan
 called Babban and Babiha,
 each lord of seven thousand camels,
 hold anxious conference.
 'Till Punnun comes we'll not be freed
 though lakes we fill with gold.
 At home we're honoured — Hasham, here
 we lack all influence.'

54.

A racing camel had they with them
 named the Flying Bed.
 So Babban, mounted on this beast,
 for Kech set out to ride.
 Far stretched the intervening stages
 but faster still he raced,
 by eager love for Punnun, Hasham,
 divinely fortified.

پچھم شہر گئے کر دھائی، ہوت علی دربارے
 رُون کوک سُناون حالت جا بلوچ پکائے
 شہر بھنبھور بلوچ سستی نے، قید کیتے ول سائے
 ہاشم باجھ پُنوں نہیں چھڈے قید رہن جگ چارے

ہوت علی سُن حال حقیقت، پچھیا بیٹھ دواناں
 ناکجھ پیش حکومت جاوے ناکجھ کار خزانہاں
 بھیجن بہت محال پُنوں نوں، ٹکٹ لیس جگاناں
 ہاشم کون شہزادہ توے، اکھ پیچھے کرواناں

بہت بیزار ہونی گل سُن کے، ہوت پُنوں دی مائی
 کون کوئی تن لار سُجھاوے آتش چار پرانی
 کون بلوچ پُنوں دے سرتوں وار سٹاں بادشاہی
 ہاشم باجھ پُنوں وچ دُنیا، ہور مراد نہ کائی

55.

They hastened on to Kecham town
 where in Hot Ali's court
 the sad Baloch this grievous news
 did thus to them outpour,
 'By Sassi in Bhambhore our tribesfolk
 are lying now detained,
 to stay there, Hasham, till he come,
 or else for evermore.'

56.

Hot Ali heard of what had passed
 and called his counsellors.
 But royal power was useless here
 and wealth of no avail.
 And who would be for sending Punnun
 to a foreign land?
 Say, Hasham, who'd despatch a prince
 to be a merchant's bail?

57.

When Punnun's mother heard the news
 she was most sorely grieved.
 'Does anyone try hard to save
 a stranger's house from flame?
 For those Baloch what care have I?
 For him I'd give my crown.
 Except to keep him safe, oh Hasham,
 have I in life no aim.'

صاف جواب لیا کرواناں، پھیر سُنوں دل آئے
 صورت نقش نگار سستی دی، کر تعریف سُنائے
 گھائل عشق تُوں ہر دم، نیندر چشم نہ لائے
 ہاشم خاطر ملن تُوں آڈے، قید بلوچ کرائے

سُن تعریف ہو یا دل گھائل، رُکی وار پرم دی
 کون کوئی دل رہیں ٹکانے، دہشت تیغ الم دی
 شہر بھنجور سُنوں دل ویسا، دسری سُر تکیچم دی
 ہاشم وار لگی اٹھ چمکی، آتش جسم کرم دی

شتر سوار سُنوں اٹھ تریا، پریم جڑی سر پائی
 رات غبار چرار سُنوں نوں چور چلے کر دھائی
 پک آرام نہ وانگ بے صبراں، رزق مہار اٹھائی
 ہاشم دیکھ نصیب بلوچاں، بھار پی بُریائی

PUNNUN IS PERSUADED TO RETURN

58.

Thus far refused, the merchants then
returned to plead with Punnun.
They spoke to him with fulsome praise
of Sassi's loveliness.

'Unceasing in her love for you
she finds no rest in sleep.
To see you, Hasham, does she hold
our tribesfolk in duress.'

59.

These praises stirred the winds of love
in Punnun's smitten breast.
Whose heart when struck by love's fell blade
can keep its former state?
Already in Bhambhore at heart
he thought no more of Kech.
This burning passion, Hasham, will
in flames engulf his fate.

60.

With Punnun thus entranced by love
the tribesmen rode their camels,
and through the night and through the dust
they stole their thief-like ways.
Impatiently they took no rest,
their halters seized by fate,
but, Hasham, see how they were doomed
to fall on evil days.

رات دِنے پھر راہ لیونے ، پلک نہ تھیون ماندے
 سخت مزاج بلوچ ہمیشاں پھرن نصیب جہاں دے
 یوسف مصر بنے کروانی ، دیکھ دوبار لجان دے
 ہاشم بادشاہاں دکھ پاؤن سخت زنجیر دلاں دے

شہر بھنبھور پیونے نظریں ، آہا وقت سویرا
 نال پیار کتوں نے کہاں ، چیت چلاک ودھیرا
 نال حقارت باغ سستی دے ، آن کتوں نے ڈیرا
 ہاشم چھوڑ دتا وچ شتراں ، چرن عراق چو پھیرا

بہت عجائب سُر و کھلوتے ، باغ چو پھیر دواراں
 فرش زمین زمرود آہا ، ثابت نقش نگاراں
 نہراں حوض فوائے برسن ، ہر ہر چوک بہاراں
 ہاشم شور جناور کر دے ، مور چکور ہزاراں

61.

They rode by day and rode by night,
 untiring for an instant.
 How stern and harsh were those Baloch,
 how ill their destiny!
 See how the merchants Joseph bring
 to Egypt once again.
 Not even princes, Hasham, may
 escape love's agony.

THE DESTRUCTION OF SASSI'S GARDEN

62.

At break of day the city of
 Bhambhore came into view.
 Spurred on by love they forced their mounts
 to race ahead still faster.
 In Sassi's garden with contempt
 they came and set up camp.
 There, Hasham, were the camels loosed
 to make the trees their pasture.

63.

Fair cypress trees stood in that garden
 girt about with walls.
 Its ground was emerald-carpeted
 Just as an artist draws.
 There streams and pools and fountains flowed
 and spring bloomed everywhere.
 How piercing, Hasham, were the cries
 of peacocks and chakors.

گھائل عشق کھڑے گل لالہ، نال لہو مکھ دھوتے
 سیدب انار انگور بھرے رس چنچ نہ لاون طوطے
 قمری کوک کرے فریاداں، سرو ازاد کھلوتے
 ہاشم دیکھ بہار چمن دی، رُوح ہے رُچ غوطے

کچھ تلخی بغدادی اُشتر، کچھ سختی کنگسانی
 دوزخ پیٹ نہ گردن چوڑی، عزرائیل نشانی
 چارن باغ تڑاون شاخاں، کرن بلوچ حیوانی
 ہاشم نال گمان پُنوں دے، چہرہ چڑھے کردانی

جار کھڑے دربار سستی دے، شور کیتا باغباناں
 باغ ویران ہویا گل سارا، چار لیا کرداناں
 خوف خدائے نہ مرنوں ڈرے کھاون مال بجاناں
 ہاشم شہر بھنبھور بے راجا، نیاؤں نہیں سلطاناں

64.

Love-smitten stood the rose and tulip
with faces bathed in blood.

No parrots pecked the pomegranates,
apples, figs and grapes.

The turtle-doves cooed mournfully,
the cypresses stood free.

So beautiful a garden, Hasham,
no heart its spell escapes.

65.

Then camels from Baghdad and Balkh
from Bactria and Canaan

with raging bellies uncontrolled —

for Death a fitting mark —

were set to strip the garden bare
by the uncouth Baloch.

See, Hasham, how for Punnun's sake
they wildly wreck the park.

66.

The gardeners then went off to lay
complaint in Sassi's court.

'Your garden lies destroyed, a field
for camels' foraging.

Those tribesmen fear not God nor death
but wreck the goods of others.

What then of justice, Hasham, say
has our Bhambhore no king?

سُن فریادِ سستی مِچِ دِل دے، عقل خیال وچائے
 کون کینے ایڈ دلیری، کرن بلوچ نکارے
 شاید ہوت پُنوں مِچِ ہوئی تاہیں کرن پسائے
 ہاشم کرن ایڈ فضولی، کون غریب بچارے

سستی نال سیاں کر مصلحت، بلغ بنے چل آئی
 ہر ہر دے ہتھ شاخ چناری تیغ مثال صفائی
 عمر اوائل مان حسن دا، جا پتیاں کر دھائی
 ہاشم مار پی کر واناں، دین بلوچ دھائی

ہے ہمیش تیار چمن مِچِ، چھج سستی دی آہی
 کچن پلنگھ روئل چنبیلی، مان گُند وچھائی

تس پر ہوت پُنوں وچ نیندر، آہی چھج سہائی
 ہاشم آس مراد سستی دی صدق چھجے ور آئی

67.

On hearing their complaints did Sassi
ponder in her heart,
'Would any lowly tribesmen dare
to be so uncontrolled?
Perhaps my prince may be among them
to make them act so free,
else, Hasham, to commit such folly
would poor folk thus make bold?'

68.

Towards the garden Sassi came
in league with her companions.
Each in her hand a plane-branch wielded
like a gleaming sword.
The maidens, proud of youth and beauty,
rushed in to attack,
and fiercely smote the tribesmen, Hasham,
who cried out overawed.
THE LOVERS' FIRST

THE LOVERS' FIRST MEETING

69.

A golden couch lay in the garden
for Sassi's use prepared,
and on it lovely wreaths of jasmine
the garden-maids would strew.
But now upon this beauteous bed
Hot Punnun lay asleep.
The constancy of Sassi, Hasham,
has made her hopes come true.

سُستی آن دُٹھا وِچ نیندر ہوت بیوہش جو خوابوں
 سُوج وانگ شعاع حُسن دی، باہر پوس نقابوں
 جے لکھ پار صندوق چھپائیے، آؤک مُشک گلابوں
 ہاشم حُسن پریت نہ چھپدے تارک ہون حجابوں

سُن فریاد بلوچیاں والی، تاں سُدھ ہوت سنبھالی
 دیکھ حیران ہو یا شہزادہ، فوج محبوباں والی
 روشن شمع جمال سُستی دا، چمک پئے ہر ڈالی
 ہاشم داغ پایگل لالہ، دیکھ سُستی لب لالی

دیکھ دیدار ہوئے تَن دونویں، عاشق درد رنجانے
 دُٹھیاں باجھ نہ رجن مُولے، نین اداس آیانے
 سِکدیاں یار ملے جس دِل نوں، قیمت قدر پچھانے
 ہاشم بنیہ اِصیل کماون، ہو رگنوار کیہ جانے

70.

When Sassi came there she beheld
 her Punnun sunk in slumber,
 and through her veil her loveliness
 sent out its sun-like rays.
 Though hidden in a thousand chests
 the rose emits its scent.
 What, Hasham, may be hid by veils
 when love and beauty blaze?

71.

On hearing the Baloches' cry
 the prince came to himself.
 then awed he fell as into view
 the lovelies' army came.
 The shining light of Sassi's beauty
 lit up every bough.
 So rosy, Hasham, were her lips
 they put the rose to shame.

72.

Though both their frames were racked with pain
 when they beheld each other,
 their sad and simple eyes found comfort
 in this sight alone.
 None but true lovers realize
 such moments' preciousness.
 How to a peasant, Hasham, may
 love's noble ways be known?

بہارِ لہار چلے کر دانی ، کیچم دارِ سویرے
 اکھڑے چل ہوتے پنوں نوں جوڑن دست بھیرے
 ہو لاپار چلے کر دانی ، تور دتو نے ڈیرے
 ہاشم عشق جہاں دل ویا کون تہاں دل پھیرے

کیچم آر کیا کر داناں ، بات جویں کچھ آہی
 ہوت اسیرسی دل کیا ، زلف گنڈل گھٹ پھی
 آون جان نہ یاد پنوں نوں ، عشق دتی بدراہی
 ہاشم حال سنا بلوچاں ، تیغ پیو تن واہی

ہوت علی دن رون دلاوے ، ہوش آرام نہ تہس نوں
 موت بھلی مر جان چنگیرا ، آن بنے دکھ جس نوں
 کیچم نار جہنم کولوں ، تیز ہو یا تپ تہس نوں
 ہاشم وانگ یعقوب پیغمبر ، حال سناوے کس نوں

THE GRIEF OF PUNNUN'S PEOPLE

73.

At dawn the party of Baloches
loaded up for Kech.

Humbly folding hands before him
'Leave now, oh prince!' they prayed.

But they were forced to go alone
removing all their tents.

Who, Hasham, overcome by love
by others will be swayed?

74.

To Kech they came and there they told
of what had come to pass.

'Quite helpless in her tresses' trap
by Sassi he's possessed.

No thought of coming has he now
by love led sore astray.'

Thus sword-like, Hasham, did their tale
strike at his father's breast.

75.

Hot Ali restless and distracted
passed his days in tears.

'How sweet it were if I could die!'
he thought, laid low by pain,
and hotter than the fires of hell
did Kecham seem to him.

Like Jacob, Hasham, there was none
to whom he could complain.

بچیم لوک فراق پُنوں دے، رو رو ہون دوانے
 یوسف و تہج آئے کروانی، ہر اک درد رنجانے
 پٹ پٹ وال سٹن وچ گلیاں محلیں شور زناتے
 ہاشم پھیر پُنوں رب لیا دے، صحیح سلامت خانے

شتر سوار بھرار پُنوں دے، پھیر پُنوں دل دھائے
 تیز بلار شراب لکائی، نال صراحی لیائے
 اوک پیش نہ جانن ہرگز، اوڑک دھوہ کمائے
 ہاشم آکھ کئے سکھ پایا، بے انصاف دکھائے

شہر بھنبھور چچا پُنوں نوں نال گئے رنگ رس دے
 دل وچ کھوٹ زبان وچ شیریں، آن ملے گل ہسدے
 وطنی لوک بتاؤن محرم، ہرگز بھیت نہ دسے
 ہاشم کون لکاؤ اھیڑی، مرگ بھلا کد پھسدے

76.

Without their prince the folk of Kech
were driven mad with grief.

'Our Joseph they have sold!' they cried,
stretched out on sorrow's rack.

While in the streets men tore their hair
indoors the women wailed.

'Soon may the Lord bring Punnun, Hasham,
to us in safety back!'

THE ABDUCTION OF PUNNUN

77.

Back to the prince raced Punnun's brothers,
mounted on their camels.

They took with them a hidden flask
of wine distilled and strong.

Since else they knew they'd not succeed
they had recourse to fraud,

but tell us, Hasham, who finds joy
through doing others wrong?

78.

They reached Bhambhore and merrily
they went to see the prince

Their hearts were false, their tongues were sweet,
with laughter they embraced.

For all their easy talk of home
they kept their secret close.

The hunters, Hasham, lie in ambush —
soon will the deer be chased.

سُن کیچم کروان سستی نوں، چڑھیا چہند ودھیرے
 رل بل، نال سیاں دے آکھے بھاگ بھلے دن، میرے
 اکدوں چار ہوئے وچ خدمت نافر غلام ودھیرے
 ہاشم پھیر نہ سمجھن پاپی، پاپ کرن دے میرے

رات پی بہہ پاس پنوں دے، جلیجھ مٹھی دل کالے
 ہوت پنوں نوں موت سستی دے، بھر بھر دین پیلے
 اوہ کہیہ درد دلاں دا جانن، اوٹھ چکا ون والے
 ہاشم دوش نہیں کرواناں، عشق کئی گھر گالے

مست بیہوش ہو یا شہزادہ، رہیا سوال جوابوں
 اک نیندر گل بانہہ سستی دی، ڈگیا ہو ر شرابوں
 عاشق ہوون تے سکھ سوون، ایہہ گل دور حسابوں
 ہاشم جن کن راہ عشق دے، کاج گویا خوابوں

79.

The news that men had come from Kech
filled Sassi's heart with joy.

She told her girl-companions then
'How happy now am I!'

To each one's service was appointed
a retinue of slaves.

Oh Hasham, sinners never reckon
what their sins imply.

80.

At Punnun's side they sat that night
sweet-tongued but black at heart.

Each cup of wine they ply him with
his Sassi's death prepares.

Yet what should camel-grazers know
of lovers' bitter pains?

So many, Hasham, love destroys —
what fault was it of theirs?

81.

Bemused by wine the prince became
incapable of speech.

Asleep he lay in Sassi's arms
for he had drunk so deep.

He was a lover, yet he slept —
a most unlikely tale,

but, Hasham, all he'd gained in love
was lost to him through sleep.

نصفوں رات گئی کرواناں، کمرہاں تنگ کسائے
 محل مست بہوش پُنوں نُون، شہر بھنبھووں دھائے
 کٹھن کٹھور بے ترس گکرمی، یار وچھوڑ لیائے
 ہاشم رون کرلاون والے، پھیر سستی دن آئے

نہڑی رات ہويا دن روشن، آن چڑی چھلانی
 سوُج جان نہیں اوہ جلدی، ویکھ چھہ آسمانی
 خاطر کرن کباب سستی دے، مار جدائی کافی
 ہاشم آن بنے جس جانے، کہیہ گل کراں زبانی

نین اُگھاڑ سستی جد ویکھے، جاگ لئی سُدھ آئی
 واحد جان پی اوہ ناہیں، نال سستی جس آہی
 نا اوہ اُوٹھ نا اوٹھاں والے، نا اوہ جام صراحی
 ہاشم توڑ سنکار سستی نے، خاک لئی سرپائی

82.

When midnight passed, the camelmen
 bound tight their camels' girths.
 With Punnun senseless in a litter
 from Bhambhore they flew.
 Those cruel ruthless wicked tribesmen
 snatched away her lover,
 and, Hasham, once again to Sassi
 came days of bitter rue.

SASSI'S DESPERATION

83.

At break of day when night was done
 the birds began to sing.
 Say not it was a sun which burned —
 it was a pyre (look well!)
 to set poor Sassi's heart ablaze
 as parting's shafts struck home.
 Not Hasham but some lover true
 of her sad state should tell.

84.

When Sassi opening her eyes
 woke up and looked about her,
 she lay alone, and found him gone
 with whom she'd lain in bed,
 the camels and their masters gone,
 gone too the cups and flask.
 She broke her bangles, Hasham, and
 threw dust upon her head.

جس دن ہوت سستی چھڑ تریا، اکھ وکھاں دن کیہا
 دوزخ اک پل مول نہ ہوسی، تا تس دن جیہا
 دل دا خون اکھیں پھٹ آیا، ظالم عشق اوہیہا
 ہاشم مار رلاوے گلیاں، بان عشق دی ایہا

توڑ سنگار سستی اٹھ دوڑی بھولہ لٹاں گھر باروں
 گھریا آن گروہ شتابی، چند چھٹا پرواروں
 دُردی ساتھ پُنوں داتکدی تیغ ہجر دیوں ماروں
 ہاشم سہن محال جدائی، سخت بُری تلواروں

دھوبن ماؤں نصیحت کر دی، آرجیہ پو راہیں
 دھوبن ذات کمینی کر کے چھوڑ گئے تڈھ تائیں
 بھج بھج پھر پچھے اٹھ دوڑیں لاج ابے تڈھ ناہیں
 ہاشم ویکھ کے دن پائے، گھنڈ بلوچ بلائیں

85.

The day when Punnun left his Sassi
 now let my tongue describe.
 Not even hell will ever be
 so scorching as that day.
 Her own heart's blood suffused her eyes —
 how cruel can love be!
 Now, Hasham, did she roam the streets —
 for such is passion's way.

86.

Out from the house in disarray
 she rushed with streaming hair.
 Although a crowd came gathering round
 the moon slipped through this ring.
 In fear she looked about for him,
 heart-stricken by his absence,
 for, Hasham, keener than a sword
 is parting's suffering.

SASSI'S ARGUMENT WITH HER FOSTER—MOTHER

87.

Then said her washerwoman mother,
 'Come to your senses, child!
 Because of your mean washer-caste
 you find yourself alone.
 Why rush so madly after him,
 have you no sense of shame?'
 See, Hasham, now what troubles have
 those wretched tribesmen sown.

سستی موڑ جواب ماؤ نوں، کر دکھ وین سُنائے
 مست بیہوش پُنوں وچ محل، پار بلوچ سدھائے
 جے کجھ ہوش ہندی شہزادے، باجھ سستی کد جائے
 ہاشم لیکھ لکھے سو واپے، چھوڑ میرا لڑ مائے

اُمڑ جائے نہیں جے تڈھ ول پریت پُنوں دی ایسی
 مست بیہوش نہ رہی مولا، انت سمیں سدھ لسی
 آپے ویکھ لیاں ول تیرے، جاگ پئی اٹھ ولسی
 ہاشم باجھ دونویں تن ملیاں چاٹ لگے مَن کیسی

مائے سخت زنجیر بلوچاں ہوت پُنوں نوں پائے
 کہ اوہ مڑن پچھا تہہ نا دیندے ایڈ ککرمی آئے
 شالا رہن خراب ہمیشاں، دُکھئے آن دُکھائے
 ہاشم کیڈک بات سستی نوں جے رب یار ملائے

88.

But Sassi, pouring out her grief,
made answer to her thus,
'The tribesmen took him in a litter
senseless and inert.

Would he have left his Sassi here
if he had been awake?'

(What fate has written Hasham tells) —
'So now let go my skirt!'

89.

'You'll learn the nature of his love
if he does not return.

Nor will his stupor last for ever —
he must at last revive
and back this way he'll come to you
as soon as he awakes.'

But, Hasham, till both bodies meet
how can the spirit thrive?

90.

'Oh mother, the Baloches hold him
tightly bound in chains.

Why should they ever let him go
since kindness they so lack?

For ever let their lives be ruined
those grievors of the grieved.

Say Hasham, why should Sassi care —
if God but bring him back!'

دل دی بات سمجھ سُن دھئے، کر کچھ ہوش ٹکانے
 زوری کرن محال بدلیں، جانن بال ایانے
 باجھ پیار چہار کھڑے کن، آدم رُپ سیانے
 ہاشم سمجھ وچار بلوچاں، کیہ سر دوش دھگانے

سُن مائے جے اینویں ہوسی، دل میرے دلبر دے
 دلبر بے پڑاہ ہمیشاں، کچھ پڑاہ نا دھر دے
 دیکھ چکور پتنگ وچائے، مُفت بڑ وچ مر دے
 ہاشم موڑ رہے نہیں مُڑ دی گھر دے لوک شہر دے

ماؤں پھیر سستی نوں آکھے، نا چرھ چیمہ دوانی
 کہ ہن جار بلوچاں ملیں، پیریں ترن چکانی
 سُولی سار اگے تھل مارو، ترس مریں بن پانی
 ہاشم جان محال کیسی، بربر گاہ بیابانی

91.

'Now, daughter, hear my words and pause
to take a little thought.

To practise force abroad is hard,
as even children know.

Would grown-up men have kidnapped him
unless constrained by love?

So were they, Hasham, then at fault —
Just think if this was so!'

92.

'What of it, mother, if my Punnun
casts me from his heart?

Heart-ravishers are ever careless
and utterly unheeding.

Regard the poor chakor and moth
whom parting slays with ease.'

Back, Hasham, will she not be turned
for all her people's pleading.

93.

Once more her mother said to Sassi

'Stop this stubborn madness.

On foot forlorn how will you, tell me,
to your prince progress?

With thorns of steel the Thal is filled
and there you'll die of thirst.

Alone, oh Hasham, who could cross
that desert wilderness?'

ترساں مول نہ مڑساں اہوں جان تکی پر دھڑاں
 جب لگ ساں نراس نہ ہواں مڑوں مول نہ ڈساں
 جے رب گوک سستی دی سُنسی، جا ملاں پگ پھڑساں
 ہاشم نہیں شہید ہو ویساں، تھل مارو وچ مڑاں

پھڑیا پندھ ہونی زبندھن ہٹ گئی دُور پنگوں
 سستی اودہ نہ دھردی آہی، جھوئیں پر پیر پنگھوں
 دل تھوں خوف اُتار سدھائی، دانوں شیر پنگوں
 ہاشم جے دم جاہس خلاصی ہووے قید فرنگوں

کر اسباب لیا شہزادی، کیونجو راہ خطر دا
 پانی خون خوراک کلیجہ، رہبر دردِ حیر دا
 گل وچ وال اکھیں وچ سُرخی، سوز جنون قہر دا
 ہاشم دیکھ احوال کلیجہ، گھائل شمسِ مستر دا

94.

'I'll go! I'll never turn aside!
 I'll risk my very life!
 While still I breathe I'll not despair!
 I'll never fear to die!
 If Sassi's prayer is answered then
 I'll go and kiss his feet!
 Else, Hasham, in the Maru Thal
 martyred will I lie!'

SASSI'S JOURNEY INTO THE DESERT

95.

Then Sassi took her way untrammelled,
 a kite whose string was cut.
 To place her foot upon the ground
 did Sassi once disdain.
 Now off she set and felt no fear
 of demons, lions, or pards,
 for, Hasham, even if she die
 she'll be released from pain.

96.

She made provision for her travels
 since her route was harsh —
 for water blood, her heart for food,
 and parting's grief her guide.
 With bloodshot eyes and hair dishevelled
 by ardent passion crazed —
 oh Hasham, see how sorely she
 by sun and moon is tried.

چمکی آن دوپسراں ویلے، گرمی گرم بہاے
 تپدی وار وگے اسمانوں، پنچھی مار اُتارے
 آتش دا دریار کھلوتا، تھل مارو دل چارے
 ہاشم پھیر بچھا نہ نہ مُردی لوں لوں ہوت پکائے

نازک پیر گلاب سی دے، مہندی نال سنگائے
 عاشق دیکھ بہے اک واری جیوت نہاں پر والے
 بالوریت تپے میچ تھل دے جیوں جوں ٹھنن بھٹھیکار
 ہاشم دیکھ یقین سسی دا، پھیر نہیں دل مارے

دل پُچ تمیش تھلاں دی گرمی، آن فراق رنجانی
 کچرک نین کرن دلبریاں، چون لباس پر پانی
 پھر پھر ڈاڈھ کرے ہمتہ دل دا، پر جد بہت دہانی
 ہاشم یار بھنبھور پیوئس، ٹٹ گیا مان رمانی

97.

At noontide then there fiercely blazed
 an incandescent heat.
 From heaven blew a wind which brought
 the birds down from the skies.
 A fiery river then arose
 and swept across the Thal.
 Yet, Hasham, Sassi turns not back,
 for Punnun still she cries.

98.

Her delicate and rose-soft feet
 made lovelier by henna,
 to gain one glimpse of which her lover
 would willingly be slain,
 were roasted in the desert sand
 like barley in the oven.
 But, Hasham, gaze on Sassi's faith,
 unturned by toil or strain.

99.

Her heart's afire, the Thal ablaze,
 and parting burns her heart.
 Her eyes console her lips a little
 while her tears still pour.
 She steels and steels again her spirit
 but then she's overcome,
 oh Hasham, in her suffering
 by thinking of Bhambhore.

بے جانا چھڈ جان سستی نوں اک پل پلک نہ جھمکاں
 گرد ہواں مچ گرد تھلاں دے وانگ جواہر دمکاں
 جل وانگوں رل دین دکھائی تھل مار دیاں چمکاں
 ہاشم کون سستی بن دیکھے ایس عشق دیاں رمکاں

تھل مارو تپ دوزخ ہو یا آتش سوز ہجر دی
 مرن محال دکھالن اوکھی صورت کیچ شہر دی
 جب لگ ساس نراس نہیں جیوں یوسف تانگھ مصری
 ہاشم سخت بلوچ کینے، بے انصاف بے دردی

کچھ ڈکدی کچھ ڈھندی بہندی اٹھدی تے دم لیندی
 جیونکر ٹوٹ شرابوں آئے پھیراتے دل ویندی
 ڈھونڈے کھوج شتر داکت ول ہرگز بھال نہ پیندی
 ہاشم جگت نہ کیونکر گاؤے پریت نیپورن جیس دی

100.

'If I had known he'd leave me sleeping
my eyes would not have closed.
Now let me mingle with the sand-grains
which here like jewels glint.'
Then in the glitter of the sands
she thought she saw a sea.
Who else, oh Hasham, would in this
of love discern a hint?

101.

The Maru Thal like hell still blazed,
within her parting raged.
To gain a glimpse of Kech is now
as hard as to return.
While still she breathes, she'll not despair,
like Joseph drawn to Egypt.
Oh Hasham, mean were those Baloch
and pitilessly stern.

102.

She stumbles now, then trips and falls,
then drawing breath she rises.
She reels as if from drunkenness,
then gets up on her feet.
She seeks to find a camel's print
but none comes into view.
Why, Hasham, should the world not sing
of her, in love complete?

قُدرت نال سستی ہتھ آیا، پھر دی کھوج شتر دا
 جان نہیں اوہ کھوج سستی نوں، ملیا جام خضر دا
 یا اوہ نورِ نطنبر دا کیسے، دارو دردِ جگر دا
 ہاشم بیک سستی نوں ملیا، قاصد کیچ شہر دا

دارو دردِ جگر دا کر کے کھوج لئے گل لاوے
 پھر پھر لار نہ سکدی ڈردی مت ایہ بھی مٹ جاوے
 پھر کر دیکھ رہی ہو دو جا، کھوج نہ نظریں آوے
 ہاشم پھیر و ساہ نہ کردی وانگ پتوں چھل جاوے

کا کا نام ایالی آیا، اوس گردے وچ چر دا
 ڈٹھا اوہ سستی نے دوڑن تھل مار وچ پھر دا
 انچر چھوڑ نشانی کر کے، پھریا راہ بدھر دا
 ہاشم کوک کرے تس دل نوں پر دل جاوے گھر دا

SASSI'S DISCOVERY OF A CAMEL'S FOOTPRINT

103.

While roaming Sassi came by chance
upon a camel's print.

Say not it was a print she found,
but Khizar's elixir,
or call it light for Sassi's eyes,
or balm for her sick heart,
or rather, Hasham, had she gained
from Kech a message clear.

104.

The print was salve for her sick heart,
she pressed it to her breast.
Too often, though, she feared to touch it
lest it go away.

She went exploring further but
no other print she found.

Like Punnun, Hasham, Punnun's tracks
poor Sassi's trust betray.

105.

A shepherd by the name of Kaka
had long lived in that place.

From far away did Sassi see him
as he roamed about.

She left her shawl to be a mark
and then set off towards him.

How faint now, Hasham, was her heart,
but loudly she cried out.

صُورَت دیکھ ایالی ڈریا، آفت مار نہ جاوے
 آدم رُوپ زَنانی صُورَت تھل مارو کہ آوے
 جیوں جیوں سُنے آواز سستی دئی چھپ چھپ جان بچاو
 ہاشم ہون چہاں دِن اُلٹے، سبھ اُلٹی بن جاوے

گوک پکار نہ اس سستی ہو کھوج بنے مڑ دوڑی
 دل نوں ساڑ تھلاں دی گرمی رُوح رنجاون تھوڑی
 پچھا دے ریلی شہزادی جان لگی پھر کوڑی
 ہاشم کون فلک نوں ٹکمرے ہار چڑھے دھرو پڑی

تزلے لاکھ جتن کر پہنچی، کھوج توڑی ہٹھ کر کے
 ٹڈی جان گئیاں چھٹ آہیں یاد بلوچیاں کر کے
 شالا رون قیامت توڑی نال سولاں دے بھر کے
 ہاشم مرن کموت بدسیں لوں طرہاں کھر کھر کے

106.

The shepherd when he saw her feared
some evil might attack him.

'Do human women ever enter
this Thal so desolate?'

So while he heard her piercing cries
he hid to save his life.

See, Hasham, how all things go ill
for those marked down by fate.

107.

She called and cried, then in despair
she ran back to the print.

The desert blazed while her sick heart
with pain was driven madder.

Quite hopeless now the poor princess
in bitter grief returned.

Can heaven, Hasham, be attained
by setting up a ladder?

108.

At last with sad and stubborn effort
she reached the print again.

The thought of the Baloch impelled
her broken heart to pray,

'Till Doomsday may they weep and let
them die abroad in pain,

and, Hasham, like poor heaps of salt
there let them waste away!'

اوڑک وقت قہر دیاں گویاں سُن پتھر ڈھل جائے
 جس اس اوٹھ سُنوں نوں کھڑیا، مرنج دل جائے
 یا اُس نینہ لگے وچ برہوں وانگ سسی جل جائے
 ہاشم موت پوے کر ہاں نوں تخم زمینوں جائے

پھر مڑ سمجھ کرے لکھ توبہ، بہت بے ادبی ہوئی
 جس پر یار کرے اسواری تیس دے جیڈ نہ کوئی
 کچھ میں وانگ نکر من ناہیں کت دل ملے نہ ڈھوئی
 ہاشم کونت ملے ہس جس نوں جان سہاگن سوئی

سر دھر کھوج اُتے غش آیا، موت سسی دی آئی
 خوش رہو یار اساں تڈھ کارن تھل وچ جان گوائی
 وگدے سار گیا دم اکسے، تن تھوں جان سدھائی
 ہاشم کر لکھ لکھ شکرانے، عشق دلوں رہ آئی

109.

So rending were her final cries
the very stones dissolved.

'Oh may that camel race to hell
which off with him did speed,
or may it fall in love like me
to be consumed by grief!

May death, oh Hasham, strike those beasts
and wipe out all their seed!'

110.

Alarmed, she realized what she'd said,

'How dared I be so rude?

For who is there to equal him
on whom my lover rides?

And who can match my wretchedness
who nowhere find support?

Oh Hasham, they who find their grooms
are truly happy brides.'

SASSI'S DEATH AND BURIAL

111.

She laid her head upon the print
then swooned and passed away.

'Live long, my love; it is for you
that in the Thal I die.'

The very moment she fell down
her spirit left her frame.

Now Hasham come, her sacrifice
with thanks to glorify.

کر کر دھیان ایالی دل مچ، سوچ کرے اس گل دی
 کیہ اسرار رہی ڈگ اینوین پھیر نہیں مڑ ہلدی
 مت کوئی نار ہے مرپاسی راہ پنڈھانو چلدی
 ہاشم چل دیکھاں کیہ ڈونا، ہون ہار نہیں ٹلدی

ایڑ چھوڑ سستی دل تریا، دل ڈرے پگ دھڑا
 صورت دیکھ احوال سستی دا، چڑھیس جوش قہر دا
 دل تھوں شوق گیا اٹھ سارا، مال دھیاں پت گھڑا
 ہاشم جان دلوں جگ فانی، دیکھ فقیری پھڑا

تھل وچ گور سستی دی کرے، دانگ یتیم منانے
 گل کفنی سرپاں برہنہ، بیٹھا گور سرھانے
 اک گل جان لئی جگ فانی، ہور کلام نہ جانے
 ہاشم خاص فقیری ایو، پر ایہہ کون پھپھانے

112.

Reflecting in his heart the shepherd
pondered all he'd seen,
'She falls, then rises not again —
here is some mystery.
Perchance a woman's died of thirst
while going on her way.
Why, Hasham, need I fear to look?
For what's to be will be.'

113.

He left his flocks and went to Sassi
taking fearful steps.
Then so affected was he by
the lovely Sassi's plight
that he abandoned all his joy
in children, goods and home.
He saw the world was fleeting, Hasham,
and so turned anchorite.

114.

There in the Thal he dug her grave
and at its head he sat
bare-headed like some helpless orphan,
a shroud his only dress.
'The world is fleeting' — this he'd learnt
and knew no other teaching.
In this, though few may grasp it, Hasham,
lies true saintliness.

اُڈیا رُوح سستی دے تن تھوئ پھیر پُنوں دل آیا
 محل مست بیوش پُنوں نوں سُفنے جا رجگایا
 لے ہُن یار اساں سنگ تیرے قول قرار نبھایا
 ہاشم رہی سستی رُوح تھل دے میں رخصت لے آیا

اٹکی نیند پُنوں اٹھ بیٹھا، جلدی وچ کجاوے
 نا اوہ شہر بھنبھور پیارا، نا اوہ محل سہاوے
 چانک چمک لگی شہزادے، کچھ سر پیر نا آوے
 ہاشم جاگ لہی پھر کہیا، عاشق چین وداوے

تس دم موڑ کر ہے نوں تریا، پھیر سستی دل مڑیا
 آون مڑن بھرار نہ دیندے، اوٹھ مہاروں پھڑیا

تیں بن باپ ہو یا نابینا، کوکے سٹریا سٹریا
 ہاشم دیکھ محل کیچم دے، پھر مڑ آویں چڑھیا

PUNNUN'S AROUSAL AND DESPERATION

115.

Up from her body Sassi's spirit
flew and came to Punnun,
and in a dream it woke him lying
senseless in the litter.

'See now, my love, I have fulfilled
the pact I made with you.
Oh Hasham, in the Thal lies Sassi.
There it was I quit her.'

116.

Then in the camel-litter Punnun
sprang up from his sleep.
He missed the sight of Sassi's palace
and Bhambhore the blest.
In sore bewilderment the prince
knew naught of where he was,
but Hasham, now he'd been aroused,
how could the lover rest?

117.

Immediately he seized his steed
and turned to ride to Sassi.
His kinsmen would not let him go
and grasped his camel's rein.
'Bereft of you your father's blind
and cries, 'I'm lost, I'm lost!' —
So Hasham, first see Kechem's palace
and then ride back again!'

بجری اگ پُنوں وِچ بھڑکی، توڑ جواب سُنائے
 کیس دی ماؤں پتا پت کیس دے، نال مویاں مرعابے
 جیسی نال اساڈے کیتی، پیش تَساڈے آئے
 ہاشم باجھ سسی نہیں دُوجا، جے رب پھیر ملائے

گھنڈ بوج خیال نہ چھڈ دے، ول ول پیر کھلونڈے
 نالے زور وکھالن نالے، اوٹھ گلے لگ روئے
 جب لگ جان نہ مڑنے دیساں آپنوں وس ہونڈے
 ہاشم عاشق باجھ عشق دے، کد کت ول دل ڈھونڈے

بُہت لاچار ہو یا شہزادہ، کھچی پکڑ کٹاری
 جس دی چمک لگی جند جاوے سو جبرِ وِپ دو دھاری
 چھوڑ مہار دتی تہ بھائییاں، ڈردیاں جان پیاری
 ہاشم کون پھڑے جند بازاں جان عشق وِچ ہاری

118.

But parting's fires inflamed the prince
who thus cut in and said,
'Think you I hold them parents still?
What care I if they die?
May all that you have done to me
be done one day to you!
Oh Hasham, may God bring me Sassi
for none but her have I.'

119.

Still cleaving to their base intent
they came and stood about him.
They made him stay as tearfully
they clasped his camel's neck.
'While we have life you shall not go,
we hold you in our power.'
What, Hasham, but his love shall hold
a lover's heart in check?

120.

At last he saw no other course —
the prince drew out his knife.
Their hearts recoiled before that deadly
glittering two-edged blade.
His brothers loosed his reins in fear
they'd lose their precious lives.
Say Hasham, who can stop those who
for love with life have paid?

سُٹی ہوت مہارستی دل ، چھڈ بھائی دُکھائی
 ملساں جا اک وار جہاں تھوں جے رب گیل چھڑائی
 جھب سٹ پیرستی دل کر ہا، وقت ایہو ہن بھائی
 ہاشم دودھ ملیدا دیساں ، کرساں ٹہل سوائی

شابش اوس کرہے دے ترنے تیز دھگے پگ تیریں
 پہتا جارستی دی قبرے ، عاقل شتر وزیروں
 نازی گور دٹھی شہزادے ، پچھیا اوس فقیروں
 ہاشم کون بزرگ سمانا ، کر واقف ایس پیریں

آکھی اوس فقیر پنوں نوں ، کھوٹ حقیقت ساری
 آہی نار پری دی صورت گرمی مار اتاری
 جیدی نام پنوں دا آہی ، درد عشق دی ماری
 ہاشم تھاوَل مکان نہ جانناں آہی کون دپاری

PUNNUN'S RETURN TO SASSI'S GRAVE

121.

So Punnun galloped back to Sassi
and left his kinsmen grieving.

'I'll come to you if by God's grace
I shake death off my track!'

'Come, camel, gallop fast to Sassi —
now's the time, my friend.

Then, Hasham, milk and cake you'll get,
no service will you lack.'

122.

Come praise the paces of that camel
swifter than an arrow,
who found his way to Sassi's tomb,
as wise as a vizier.

The prince beheld a fresh-dug grave
and asked the hermit this,

'Now, Hasham, tell me of the saint
who has been buried here.'

123.

Then the hermit spoke to Punnun
of all that he had seen,

'She was a sylph-like maiden who
the heat could not withstand.

The name of 'Punnun' she recited
and here was slain by love.

But, Hasham, who she was I know not
nor her native land.'

سُن کے ہوت زمین پر ڈگیا ، کھار کیلجے کا نی
 کھلے گئی گور پیا وچ قبرے ، پھیرے دلجانی
 خاطر عشق گئی رل مائی ، صورت جس جوانی
 ہاشم عشق بلوچ سستی دا ، جگ جگ رہگ کہانی

124.

On hearing this the prince collapsed,
love's arrow in his heart.

The grave gaped open, in he fell,
he met with her again.

So all their beauty, looks and youth
were turned to dust for love.

But, Hasham, men will tell for ever
the story of these twain.

GLOSSARY

Only the more uncommon words are given. There is no separate listing of the many abbreviated forms of verbs employed by Hasham. Most of these fall into the following patterns:

آوے گا - ہووے گا	=	آوگ - ہوگ
اس نوں آوے - ہووے	=	آوس - ہووس
اس نوں پیا - گیا	=	پیوس - گیوس
انہاں نے کیتا - کیا	=	کتونے - کیونے
Was		آہا - آہی
Sighs		آہیں
Without limit		آپر آپارا
To be broken		اٹکنا
Witness		اگاہی
To open		اگھاڑن
Blaze		النا
Shawl		انچر
At last		اوٹک
So		اویہا
Hunter		اہیٹری
Shepherd		ایالی
Such		ایڈ
Flock		ایڈ

Mythical snake

باشک ناگ

Custom

بان

Abroad

بدیس - بدیسیں

Desert

بربرگاہ

Separation

برہ - برہوں

Rather

بلک

Dolphin

بلہین

Towards

بنے

Loudmouth

بول وگاڑ

Grain-parcher

بھٹھیار

Secret

بھیت - بھید

Sin

پاپ

Sinner

پاپی

Traveller

پاندھی

To deliver

پنچا دن

Tearful

پر آنسو

Love

پریم - پریم

Abroad

پر ملکیں

Halo round moon

پر وار

Foot

پگ

Leopard

پنگ

Way

پنڈھ

Traveller

پنڈھانو

Dress

پہراوا

Longing

تا نگمہ

Therefore

To you

Entreaty

To go, to move

To break

Sea-monster

To become

Without you

In place

Weakness

Service

To repeat

To win

Birth

To fashion

Drug

Water

Merman

Deadly

Washerman

As great as

Whose

Suddenly

تائیں

تُدھتائیں

تَرلا

تُرُن

تُڑاون

تُندوا

تھیون

تیں بن

ٹکانے

ٹوٹ

ٹہل

بچین

بجتن

بُرم - جنم

بُڑت - بڑاون

بُڑی

بل

بلہوڑا

بمروپ

بھڑوا

جیڈ

جیں دا

پانک

To conceive	چتارن
Funeral pyre	چنخه
To graze	چنگاؤن
Beak	چنخ
Spark	چنگ
Portion	چماندا
Bed	چھلیج
To be obstinate	چھیم چٹھن
To bewail one's fate	حال و نجاؤن
Animal behaviour	حیوانی
Disgrace	خرخواری
Towards	دار
Demon	دانو
Sage	دناؤ
Double-edged	دو دھاری
To rush	دھائی کرن
Hymn	دھرت
Mythical bull	دھول
Deceit	دھوہ
Firmness	ڈاڈھ
Seen	ڈکھا
To support	ڈھوون

ڈھوئی

Support

راکش

Demon

رڑھاون - روڑھن

To cast away

رُکمن

To blow

رَنجانا

Afflicted, grieved

ساس

Breath, life

سُدھ

Awareness

سُدھاون

To depart

سُرت

Sense, awareness

سُرجن ہارا

Creator

سُکن

To yearn

سُلاہن

To praise

سامنا

Contained

سمیانے

Like

سُپنورن

Complete

سنگ

With

سُہاگن

Happy bride

سُتیاں

Girl friends

کانی

Arrow

کانی - کوئی

Any

کت دل

Where, in any direction

گٹھا

Slaughtered

کچرک

How long?

کد اہوں

From somewhere

To wail

کُرلاون

Fate

کرم

Camel

کرم

Wicked

مُسکرمی

Family

کُل

Sea-monster

کُما

Evil death

کُموت

Gold

کُنچن

Noose

کُنڈل

Of Canaan, Joseph

کُنغانی

Maiden

کُنیا

Bridegroom

کُونت

Farhad

کوه شکر

To slaughter

کُهاون

To take away

کھرن

Falsity

کھوٹ

How great?

کیٹ

Whose?

کیں دا

To cast

گھتن

Rascally

گھنڈ

Pursuit

گیل

Skirt

لٹ

Burning heat

لس

Greed

لو بھ

To want

لو رن

Jewel

ماہنامہ

Pleasing

من بھانا

To please

من کھاؤں

Leading string

عہار

To gallop

مہار سٹن

Sea-monster

ناگر محمد

Despairing

خزائن

United

نزد صحن

Salvation

نتارا

Destroyed

نشت

Servant

فخر

Wretched

نکاح

Unlucky

نکر من

Justice

نیاؤں

Love

فہم

To read

واپس

To sacrifice

وارسٹن - وارن

To be fulfilled

در آون

To fulfil

ور لیا ون

Trust

وساه

To be forgotten

وِسرَن

To trade

و ما جن

Dealings

15

Spent

وہوون

To pass

Will go

Going

Sad tale

Murderous

Fate

Trick

وېلون

کولې

ویندا

وین

هتیارې

هرون مار

هیرا

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SASSI PUNNUN

Like all the great *qissa*—writers, Hasham Shah was a man of considerable education. His fame, however, rests chiefly on his master—work, reckoned among the finest of Punjabi *qissas*— Sassi Punnun.

Sassi Punnun is a tale of tragically thwarted love between Sassi, daughter of the king of Bhambhore in Sind and Prince Punnun, the son of the Hot tribe of Baluch, whose capital is at Kech in the Makran desert.

Sassi's torments and sufferings constitute the high point of the story and have repeatedly received superb literary expression in mystical lyrics, whether in the Sindhi *Risalo* of Bhitai or in the later *Kafian* of Farid. Hasham Shah's poem gives great prominence to the sufferings of the unfortunate Sassi but it provides also a superb introduction to a legend which has occupied such an important position in the local culture of Pakistan.

CHRISTOPHER SHACKLE is the author of over half a dozen books on Punjabi language and literature, including *The Siraiki language of Central Pakistan* (1976), and *Fifty Poems of Khwaja Farid* (1983).

He holds a Ph.D. from London University and is presently Reader in Modern Languages of South Asia in the University of London, as well as on the staff of the School of Oriental and African Studies.
